The Jewish–Greek Tradition in Antiquity and the Byzantine Empire

JAMES K. AITKEN
JAMES CARLETON PAGET

THE JEWISH–GREEK TRADITION IN ANTIQUITY AND THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

The Jewish–Greek tradition represents an arguably distinctive strand of Judaism characterized by use of the Greek language and interest in Hellenism. This volume traces the Jewish encounter with Greek culture from the earliest points of contact in antiquity to the end of the Byzantine Empire. It honours Nicholas de Lange, whose distinguished work brought recognition to an undeservedly neglected field, in part by dispelling the common belief that Jewish–Greek culture largely disappeared after 100 CE. The authors examine literature, archaeology, and biblical translations, such as the Septuagint, in order to illustrate the substantial exchange of language and ideas. *The Jewish–Greek Tradition in Antiquity and the Byzantine Empire* demonstrates the enduring significance of the tradition and will be an essential handbook for anyone interested in Jewish studies, biblical studies, ancient and Byzantine history, or the Greek language.

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N. R. M. de Lange

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EDITED BY

JAMES K. AITKEN AND JAMES CARLETON PAGET

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107001633

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First published 2014

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data
The Jewish–Greek Tradition in Antiquity and the Byzantine Empire / edited by
James K. Aitken and James Carleton Paget.
pages cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-107-00163-3 (hardback)
1. Jews–Civilization–Greek influences. 2. Jews–Byzantine Empire–Intellectual life.
3. Judaism–Byzantine Empire–History. 4. Hellenism. 5. Bible. Greek–Versions.
6. Byzantine Empire–Ethnic relations. I. Aitken, J. K. (James K.), editor.
II. Paget, James Carleton, editor.
DS113.J49 2014
305.892′40560902–dc23
2014012705

ISBN 978-1-107-00163-3 Hardback

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Preface

Amos Oz

I first met Nicholas de Lange at Oxford in 1969. A mutual friend introduced us. Nicholas, who was just finishing his academic studies at the time, used to wear a three-piece suit with a gold chain dangling from his belt into his trouser pocket. In the 1960s, amidst the hippie atmosphere among the students at Oxford, there was something astonishing in the pose Nicholas struck, as if he was saying to the world: I make my own way, come hell or high water.

When we began to talk, I was immediately won over by his sharp humour, his erudition, and – above all – the warmth that he exuded. He was voraciously curious (in my opinion, curiosity is one of the highest moral attributes). It was this curiosity that made him ask me, during our first meeting, what I was writing. I told him that I had just finished writing a story about the crusades. Nicholas, in his jovial enthusiasm, asked my permission to read the story.

I was forced to tell him that the story was in Hebrew. To my astonishment, Nicholas replied that he read a little Hebrew, and I was surprised, as I would be time and time again in the years to come, to discover the unexpected things Nicholas knew. I entrusted my story to him and after two or three weeks he came back to me with an English translation of one or two chapters from *Unto Death*. It was a translation by a virtuoso, who preserved the musical quality of the original and, wondrously, found an English equivalent for every nuance of the Hebrew text. Right there and then I was swept up by Nicholas's enthusiasm and we both dived in to translate the story into English. It was a race of the blind and the lame, because Nicholas was not well versed in contemporary Hebrew and my own knowledge of English was halting as well. Still, we managed to give *Unto Death* a suit of English armour that won the hearts of many.

That's how Nicholas and I began to collaborate, labouring together on translating *My Michael* and other works, until Nicholas had no need for

me any more. He spread his wings and worked wonderfully well as an independent translator.

Over the years that we worked together, Nicholas became an inspiring teacher as well as a close and dear friend. I learned from him about Judaism and theology, he taught me English and something of the mysteries of the art of translation. Nicholas went on to translate Hebrew medieval poetry, and novels by A. B. Yehoshua and S. Yizhar, and by doing so he brought modern Hebrew literature closer to the English-speaking world. He is endowed with that wonderful combination of humility and boldness, without which the translator may be either a mere amanuensis, or a reckless adaptor who makes the text his own. Nicholas has the linguistic gifts of a great, inventive poet, who can conjure up crisp and enthralling parallels.

I always thought that adapting a work of literature from one language to another is like playing a violin concerto on a piano. It may be possible as long as you are careful not to make the piano sound like a violin.

Nicholas de Lange is a great musical player.

He performed wonderful feats of translation at the same time as he was teaching and writing excellent academic work. His articles and books in the history of religious thought, in Jewish studies, and in the history of the Jewish people are works of art, showing scholarly depth and theological quickwittedness, all in fluent, flowing words that enlighten the eyes of the reader. Already in his first book, *Origen and the Jews* (1976), Nicholas did wonders to breathe life and reality into a remote subject. In his *Atlas of the Jewish World* (1984), he made us see clearly what was until then faraway and abstract. His *Introduction to Judaism* (2000) put into words a complex and fascinating mental vista. In his scholarly articles Nicholas is always clear, precise, profound.

Our friendship has lasted now for forty years. Nicholas doesn't walk around any more wearing a three-piece suit with a golden chain hanging from his belt. But he still treads his own, unique path, leaving wherever he goes a trail of wisdom, exuberance, love of life, inexhaustible curiosity and good cheer. He is not only a great and original thinker and a gifted teacher – to my mind Nicholas de Lange is also the greatest translator of Hebrew into the English language.

Acknowledgements

A number of people have assisted in the production of this book. For academic advice and reading of some of the chapters, special thanks go to Professor William Horbury. Ares Papangelou, Dr Garth Gilmour and Dr Alexander Panayotov have all assisted in acquiring material and publications. Monique Cuany and Dr Yaron Peleg have assisted in translating from French and modern Hebrew respectively. The fund managers of the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, have provided financial support for editing and translating. Finally, we thank Cambridge University Press for accepting this volume for publication, and for all the assistance provided by Anna Lowe, Alexandra Poreda and Laura Morris.

J. K. A.
J. N. C. P.

Abbreviations

General

AB	Anchor Bible
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AHistRev	*American Historical Review*
AJS Review	*Association of Jewish Studies Review*
ALGHJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des Hellenistischen Judentums
ANF	A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 10 vols. Edinburgh, 1885–7; repr. Peabody, Mass., 1994
ANRW	H. Temporini and W. Haase (eds.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1972–
ANTF	Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung
ARG	*Archiv für Religionsgeschichte*
ASR	*Annali di scienze religiose*
BAIAS	*Bulletin of Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society*
BAR	*Biblical Archaeology Review*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BEATAJ	Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentums
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BGU	*Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen* (later *Staatlichen*) *Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden*. Berlin
Bib	*Biblica*
BJG	*Biblical Judaeo-Greek*
BJGS	*Bulletin of Judaeo-Greek Studies*
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*

BJS	*Brown Judaic Studies*
BMGS	*Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*
BNJ	*Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher*
BS	B. Mazar, M. Schwabe, B. Lifshitz and N. Avigad. *Beth She'arim I–III*, 3 vols. Jerusalem: Massada, 1973–6
BS/EB	*Byzantine studies/Études Byzantines*
ByzZ	*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
ChrEg	*Chronique d'Égypte*
CIIP	*Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*
CIJ	*Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum*
CP	Constantinopolitan Pentateuch
CPA	Christian Palestinian Aramaic
DGE	*Diccionario Griego-Español*. Madrid: Instituto Antonio de Nebrija, 1980
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
EAJS	European Association of Jewish Studies
EJJS	*European Journal of Jewish Studies*
ErIsr	*Eretz-Israel*
ETL	*Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*
GBBJ	The Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism Project
GLAJJ	*Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*
GOTR	*Greek Orthodox Theological Review*
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
HistJud	*Historia Judaica*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HTS	*Harvard Theological Studies*
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
IJudO I	D. Noy, A. Panayotov and H. Bloedhorn (eds.), *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis: Eastern Europe*. TSAJ 101; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004
IJudO II	W. Ameling (ed.), *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis: Kleinasien*. TSAJ 99; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004
IJudO III	D. Noy and H. Bloedhorn (eds.), *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis: Syria and Cyprus*. TSAJ 102; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004

JAB	*Journal of the Aramaic Bible*
JAC	*Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*
JAJ	*Journal of Ancient Judaism*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JIGRE	D. Noy and W. Horbury (eds.), *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt*. Cambridge University Press, 1992
JIWE	D. Noy (ed.), *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe*, 2 vols. Cambridge University Press, 1993 and 1995
JJGL	*Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSJSup	*Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements*
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JSQ	*Jewish Studies Quarterly*
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JStud	*Jewish Studies*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KJV	King James Version
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
Leš	*Lešonénu*
LSJ	H. G. Liddell, R. Scott and H. S. Jones, with R. McKenzie, *A Greek–English Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940
MGWJ	*Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*
Mus	*Muséon: Revue d'études orientales*
NETS	*New English Translation of the Septuagint*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright. Oxford University Press, 2007
OCP	*Orientalia Christiana Periodica*
OLA	*Orientalia lovaniensia analecta*
OtSt	*Oudtestamentische Studiën*
P.Cair.Zen.	C. C. Edgar (ed.), *Zenon Papyri: Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire*. Cairo, 1925–40
P.Lond.	*Greek Papyri in the British Museum*. London, 1893–1974

P.Oxy.	*The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. Published by the Egypt Exploration Society in Graeco-Roman Memoirs. London, 1898–
PAAJR	*Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research*
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PGM	K. Preisendanz (ed.), *Papyri graecae magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*. Berlin, 1928
PL	Patrologia Latina
PSI	*Papiri greci e latini*. Pubblicazioni della Società Italiana per la ricerca dei papiri greci e latini in Egitto. Florence
RAr	*Revue archéologique*
REG	*Revue des études grecques*
REJ	*Revue des études juives*
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SCI	*Scripta Classica Israelica*
SCO	*Studi Classici e Orientali*
ScrHier	*Scripta Hierosolymitana*
SJOT	*Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*
SNTSMS	Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SPB	Studia post-Biblica
SPhilo	*Studia Philonica*
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
Suppl. Mag.	R.W. Daniel, and F. Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum*, Papyrologica Coloniensia 16, 2 vols., Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990–2
TRE	G. Krause and G. Müller (eds.), *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*. Berlin, 1977–2007
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TSK	*Theologische Studien und Kritiken*
TSMJ	Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism
UPZ	U. Wilcken (ed.), *Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit (ältere Funde)*. Berlin 1927–57
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
VCSup	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*

VTSup	Supplements to *Vetus Testamentum*
WJ	*Wiener Jahreshefte*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testamentum
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

Primary sources

Biblical books

Gen.	Genesis
Exod.	Exodus
Lev.	Leviticus
Num.	Numbers
Deut.	Deuteronomy
Josh.	Joshua
Judg.	Judges
Ruth	Ruth
1–2 Sam.	1–2 Samuel
1–2 Kgs	1–2 Kings
1–2 Chr.	1–2 Chronicles
Ezra	Ezra
Neh.	Nehemiah
Esth.	Esther
Job	Job
Ps/Pss.	Psalms
Prov.	Proverbs
Eccl.	Ecclesiastes
Song	Song of Songs
Isa.	Isaiah
Jer.	Jeremiah
Lam.	Lamentations
Ezek.	Ezekiel
Dan.	Daniel
Hos.	Hosea
Joel	Joel
Amos	Amos
Obad.	Obadiah

Jonah	Jonah
Mic.	Micah
Nah.	Nahum
Hab.	Habakkuk
Zeph.	Zephaniah
Hag.	Haggai
Zech.	Zechariah
Mal.	Malachi
Bar.	Baruch
2 Esdr.	2 Esdras
Sir.	Sirach
1 Macc.	1 Maccabees
2 Macc.	2 Maccabees
Wis.	Wisdom of Solomon

Works of Josephus

Ag. Ap.	*Against Apion*
Ant.	*Antiquities of the Jews*
Life	*The Life*
War	*The Jewish War*

Works of Philo

Abr.	*De Abrahamo*
Aet.	*De aeternitate mundi*
Agr.	*De agricultura*
Cher.	*De cherubim*
Conf.	*De confusione linguarum*
Congr.	*De congress eruditionis gratia*
Contempl.	*De vita contemplativa*
Decal.	*De decalogo*
Det.	*Quod deterius potiori insidari soleat*
Ebr.	*De ebrietate*
Fug.	*De fuga et inventione*
Gig.	*De gigantibus*
Her.	*Quis rerum divinarum heres sit*
Leg.	*Legum allegoriae*
Legat.	*Legatio ad Gaium*
Migr.	*De migratione Abrahami*

Mos.	*De vita Mosis*
Mut.	*De mutatione nominum*
Opif.	*De opificio mundi*
Post.	*De posteritate Caini*
Praem.	*De praemiis et poenis*
Prob.	*Quod omnis probus liber sit*
Prov.	*De providentia*
QE	*Quaestiones et solutiones in Exodum*
QG	*Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesin*
Sacr.	*De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini*
Somn.	*De somniis*
Spec.	*De specialibus legibus*

Rabbinic literature

ʾAbot R. Nat.	*ʾAbot de Rabbi Nathan*
b. ʿAbod. Zar.	*Bavli ʿAbodah Zarah*
b. B. Qam.	*Bavli Baba Qamma*
b. Ber.	*Bavli Berakot*
b. Giṭ	*Bavli Giṭṭin*
b. Ḥag.	*Ḥagigah*
b. Ketub.	*Bavli Ketubbot*
b. Meg.	*Bavli Megillah*
b. Menaḥ.	*Bavli Menaḥot*
b. Moʾed Qaṭ.	*Bavli Moʾed Qaṭan*
b. Ned.	*Bavli Nedarim*
b. Pesaḥ.	*Bavli Pesaḥim*
b. Qidd.	*Bavli Qiddušin*
b. Šabb.	*Bavli Šabbat*
b. Sanh.	*Bavli Sanhedrin*
b. Soṭ.	*Bavli Soṭah*
b. Tem.	*Bavli Temurah*
b. Yoma	*Bavil Yoma*
Deut. Rab.	*Deuteronomy Rabbah*
Eccl. Rab.	*Ecclesiastes Rabbah*
Esth. Rab.	*Esther Rabbah*
Exod. Rab.	*Exodus Rabbah*
Gen. Rab.	*Genesis Rabbah*
Lam. Rab.	*Lamentations Rabbah*
Lev. Rab.	*Leviticus Rabbah*

m. Mak.	*Mishnah Makkot*
m. Meg.	*Mishnah Megillah*
m. Qidd.	*Mishnah Qiddušin*
m. Šabb.	*Mishnah Šabbat*
m. Sanh.	*Mishnah Sanhedrin*
m. Soṭ.	*Mishnah Soṭah*
m. Ter	*Mishnah Terumot*
m. Yad.	*Mishnah Yadayim*
Mas. Sop.	*Masseket Soperim*
Mek. R. Ish.	*Mekilta of Rabbi Ishmael*
Pesiq. Rab Kah.	*Pesiqta de Rab Kahana*
Pirqe R. El.	*Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer*
Song Rab.	*Song of Songs Rabbah*
t. ʿAbod. Zar.	*Tosefta ʿAbodah Zarah*
t. Meg.	*Tosefta Megillah*
t. Šabb.	*Tosefta Šabbat*
t. Sanh.	*Tosefta Sanhedrin*
Tanḥ.	*Tanḥuma*
y. Meg.	*Yerushalmi Megillah*
y. Moʾed Qaṭ.	*Yerushalmi Moʾed Qaṭan*
y. Šabb.	*Yerushalmi Šabbat*
y. Sanh.	*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin*
y. Soṭ.	*Yerushalmi Soṭah*
y. Sukkah	*Yerushalmi Sukkah*
y. Yoma	*Yerushalmi Yoma*
Yal. Shimʿoni	*Yalquṭ Shimʿoni*

Other sources

Ant.	Plutarch, *Life of Antonius*
Civ.	*De civitate Dei*
Cod. justin.	*Codex justinianus*
Cod. theod.	*Codex theodosianus*
Comm. Ezech.	Jerome, *Commentariorum in Ezechielem libri XVI*
Comm. in Matth.	*Commentarium in evangelium Matthaei*
De Aed.	Procopius, *De Aedificiis*
Dial.	Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*
Epist.	*Epistulae*
Hist. eccl.	*Historia ecclesiastica*
Hist.	*History*

Id.	*Idylls*
Log.	Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians*
Math.	Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos*
Od.	*Odyssey*
Orig. Princ.	*Origenis Libri Peri archōn seu De principiis libri IV*
Praep. ev.	Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica*
Pss. Sol.	*Psalms of Solomon*
Pyr.	Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhoniae hypotyposes*
Rec.	*Recognitions*
Sib. Or.	*Sibylline Oracles*
Suppl.	*Supplices*

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

James K. Aitken and James Carleton Paget

The term Jewish–Greek 'tradition' recognizes the continuity of a Greek-speaking Jewish world and a Greek literary engagement among Jews. It begins in antiquity, as early as the third century BCE with the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek (the Septuagint), and continues up to the period of the Byzantine Empire, where traces remain of Jewish scholarly activity in Greek and use of Greek versions of the Bible. It could be said to represent a distinctive strand within Judaism, and one that reflects a European contribution to Jewish studies, seen both in the fact that the object of study is largely Jews in or in contact with Europe, and also in the fact that it is modern European scholars who have largely contributed to the subject.[1] Although this volume only covers the period up to the end of Byzantine Empire, the theme could be said to have an ongoing importance and significance afterwards among Jewish communities in Greece, even if these were largely destroyed during the Second World War.

In an academic career which has embraced a striking range of subjects within the field of Jewish studies, Nicholas de Lange has devoted much of his energy to what, for want of a better description, we might call Judaism and Hellenism, or Judaism and Greek culture, as described above. His work in this area has encompassed the ancient period, beginning with his doctoral dissertation on Origen and the Jews, published in 1976, and followed by contributions on the apocryphal books of the Bible, the Septuagint and the Greek versions. Perhaps distinctively, Nicholas has sought through a variety of publications and through the successful acquisitions of funds for two large international projects, to advance the study of Byzantine Jewry. In so doing he has built upon and extended the work of such distinguished predecessors as D. S. Blondheim, Joshua Starr and

[1] See de Lange's discussion of the European dimension of Judaeo-Greek studies (de Lange 1999–2000a).

Samuel Krauss, seeking to show the scholarly world why this is a fecund and significant field, which has been undeservedly neglected.

The conviction that Byzantine Judaism has not received proper attention appears in a variety of places in Nicholas's work, notably in the Foreword to the first number in 1987 of the *Bulletin of Judaeo-Greek Studies*, which Nicholas himself founded and continues to edit, and which has, through book lists, reviews and short essays, greatly advanced our understanding of Judaeo-Greek studies from the ancient to the modern period. Here Nicholas begins with a clear statement: 'This Bulletin has its origins in the sense of loneliness and isolation felt by a number of scholars working the neglected field of Judaeo-Greek, and, more particularly, Judaeo-Byzantine, studies',[2] and he continues by noting how, relative to the other areas of Jewish-medieval studies, this one has been sadly underrepresented. A similar concern can be found as a leitmotiv in many other places in Nicholas's writings.

In part this interest in Byzantine Judaism arises from an attempt to combat a prejudice, held by Jewish and Christian scholars alike, which assumes that after about 100 CE, Jewish–Greek culture broadly disappeared and that by the end of the second century, possibly a little later, the majority of Jews had begun to revert to a Hebraic culture, a phenomenon that first manifested itself in the publication of the Mishnah. Although de Lange is clear that there were signs of a Hebrew revival as early as Bar Kokhbah, an interest in Greek and a concern with Greek culture continued, in his opinion, well beyond the second century.[3] There are indications of this important thesis as early as his work on Origen and the Jews.[4] Here Nicholas is keen to highlight proof of rabbinic knowledge of Greek, already emphasized by Samuel Krauss,[5] as well as evidence, hinted at in the character of the Jew, whom Origen quotes in his *Contra Celsum*, of what de Lange termed 'another Judaism', which took a strong interest in Greek classical culture and which expressed itself in the Greek language.

Hints contained in this early work at ongoing interest in Greek culture beyond the second century CE, become considerably more than that in de Lange's later work. In this he has concentrated much of his energy on exploring evidence to support knowledge of Greek versions of the Bible, especially in the Byzantine period. Keen to contradict the view that the Christian church's adoption of the Septuagint as its Bible led to a Jewish abandonment of that text and versions in Greek more generally, de Lange,

[2] *BJGS* 1 (Autumn 1987), 1 (edited by Nicholas de Lange and Judith Humphrey).
[3] See de Lange 1996b. [4] De Lange 1976. [5] Krauss 1898–9.

following the work of D. S. Blondheim and N. Fernández Marcos,[6] has uncovered evidence, much of it from the Cairo Genizah, to show that 'Greek-speaking Jews throughout the Middle Ages made use of translations of the biblical books from Hebrew into Greek'.[7] Significantly, in contrast to the use of new vernacular translations elsewhere in the medieval Jewish world, the evidence in Byzantium is remarkable since it indicates the 'presence of a continuous tradition going back to ancient Greek-speaking Judaism' and 'the enduring presence of Greek Jewish exegesis within rabbinic Judaism, leaving clear marks on commentaries written in Hebrew by Byzantine rabbis'.[8] The attempt to advance this hypothesis of an enduring Jewish–Greek tradition is seen in a number of Nicholas's articles relating to manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah, beginning with his publication of a bilingual glossary in 1980,[9] and arriving at its most compendious expression so far in his *Greek Jewish Texts from the Cairo Genizah* of 1996.[10] While the latter publication is not concerned exclusively with material relating to the Greek Bible and traditions of its translation, one of his more recent projects entitled *Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism*, secured through a grant from the AHRC, is, its stated aim being to gather 'evidence for the use of Greek Bible translations by Jews in the Middle Ages, and to make these texts available to scholars as a corpus'; and it promises to furnish the scholarly world with at least three volumes of text and commentary on texts betraying knowledge of the Greek versions of the Hebrew Bible.

While an interest in the Greek Bible runs as a thread through de Lange's engagement with the subject of Judaism and Hellenism,[11] a concern with the life and religiosity of the Judaeo-Greek communities more generally has also been prominent. This can be seen in a number of publications on the Jewish Passover as this was celebrated in the Greek world,[12] together with work on material other than manuscripts, such as inscriptions and medallions.[13] The most recent manifestation of this interest can be seen in the European-funded project, which aims to map digitally the Jewish communities of the Byzantine Empire, and to collate all the information

[6] Blondheim 1924; Fernández Marcos 1979.

[7] De Lange 2009a, 6. The website of the project goes further and states: 'some Jews continued to use the Greek language throughout the Middle Ages, and that, while the Hebrew Bible came to play a central part in their religious and cultural life, they also knew the Bible in Greek' ('Background', http://gbbj.org [4 March 2013]).

[8] De Lange 2008, 116.

[9] De Lange 1980; cf. too de Lange 1982.

[10] De Lange 1996a.

[11] De Lange 2013b.

[12] De Lange 1999–2000b; 2009b.

[13] De Lange 1999–2000c; 2001.

available about them.[14] The project has only recently come to an end, producing an open-access online resource. This body of work considerably extends and amplifies our knowledge of Byzantine Jewry, and will become a hugely significant aid to scholars interested in the subject.

De Lange's work, which emerges in part from an instinctive love of things Hellenic, reflected and encouraged by his study of Classics at Oxford in an atmosphere where an interest in Hellenistic as well as classical Greek was fostered, and stretching to an attachment to the modern state of Greece (Nicholas's concern with the modern period is seen not least in the pages of the *Bulletin* and his own support of the synagogue at Chania in Crete), has, then, contributed greatly to the deepening and enriching of the study of Judaeo-Greek culture. It is work taken up with wide-ranging themes relating to the nature of Jewish history and identity, characteristically based upon painstaking philological and palaeographic labour, as can be seen in his editions of texts from the Cairo Genizah. In fact it is Nicholas's striking ability to combine the activities of Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's truffle-seeker, shown through his meticulous examination of manuscripts and his profound linguistic knowledge (the fact that he is a considerable Hebraist has only served to make his contribution to Judaeo-Greek studies more profound, acute, and wide-reaching), with the flair of the Frenchman's parachutist, evidenced in his ability to remain aware of the bigger picture,[15] which distinguishes him as a scholar of versatility and breadth, as much at home in the pithy, philological note as in the more suggestive general essay, brimming with thought-provoking observations.

One could end these introductory remarks by delineating Nicholas's achievements in other areas of Jewish studies, both as an award-winning translator, already described by Amos Oz in the foreword to this volume; as an incisive and interestingly opinionated reviewer of numerous books on a multitude of subjects; or as an authoritative writer on the history and religion of the Jews in books which attain the highest level of what one might term, with a sense of admiration, 'haute vulgarisation'. That would no doubt be appropriate, but both of us as former, and in many ways current, pupils of Nicholas, want to conclude by noting his role as a teacher and leader of and participant in seminars. First we would like to draw attention to his Friday morning Hebrew readings. Conducted

[14] Website: www.mjcb.eu/.

[15] For a discussion of Leroy Ladurie's distinction see Cannadine 1998, 163. Cannadine introduces his discussion of the metaphor by asserting that 'it is alleged' that the Frenchman was responsible for the distinction, indicating that no discussion exists of the matter in the Frenchman's extant works.

in an informal but always exacting atmosphere, they have been notable for, amongst many other things, their insistence on the need to place Mishnaic, Talmudic or medieval texts in their wider, often classical, setting, so reflecting again Nicholas's concern with the Hellenic background to Jewish culture. Secondly, in these different contexts, whether the seminar room or lecture hall, one has often marvelled at the acuity of an observation or the brilliance of a connection made by Nicholas. In these settings, as much as in his written work, Nicholas shows that, even as he moves into his eighth decade, he has much more to give the world of Jewish studies. They also give ample evidence of the generous manner in which Nicholas has always held his knowledge, keen to share information and to collaborate, the latter quality pungently displayed, *inter alia*, in his successful leadership of two large projects and in the section of the *Bulletin* dedicated to current projects being started or under way and to calls to subscribers to provide information about their most recent work. For Nicholas, then, scholarship is a collective enterprise, enriched by interaction and exchange. This concern was as present at the beginning of Nicholas's career as it is towards its later stages. So in *Origen and the Jews*, resisting the temptation to conclude the work by emphasizing the polemical and rebarbative aspects of that church father's exchange with the Jews, de Lange is more positive and sanguine: 'At a time when Church and Synagogue find themselves drawing closer together once more in the face of a new paganism it is edifying and instructive to contemplate an era when, despite powerful antagonisms, Jews and Christians could live in close harmony and derive mutual benefit from their intercourse.'[16]

The chapters in this volume, all written by friends and colleagues of Nicholas, reflect the range of his contribution to Judaeo-Greek studies, in terms of both their chronological spread and subject matter (from the origins of the Septuagint to late Byzantine history) and their genre (from the general survey of a historical period or a central subject, to the more precise examination of a collection of Judaeo-Greek manuscripts).

The volume opens with a section on history. Günter Stemberger assesses evidence for Jewish interest in Greek culture from the time of Alexander the Great to Theodosius II. In the process he tackles many of the central debates which have preoccupied scholars, from the causes of the Maccabean revolt, often conceived as a conflict inspired by cultural tensions, to the purpose of Jewish–Greek literature and to the role of Greek in rabbinic texts. He concludes his piece by warning that the tendency

[16] De Lange 1976, 135.

to see Hellenization and assimilation as the same thing misrepresents the evidence, noting that Judaism and Hellenism were overlapping, not clashing, cultures. Steven Bowman continues the review of the historical context, covering the Byzantine period, which is conceived here as running from the time of Constantine to the fall of Constantinople. His chapters concentrates on two subjects, that of how to periodize Jewish experience in the Byzantine empire, and Jewish use of Greek. In relation to the former, Bowman argues that a traditional periodization of the history of the Byzantine empire, which roughly falls into three parts, does less justice to the Jewish experience than one which falls into two parts, running from the fourth to the mid-tenth century, and from the last third of the tenth century to the middle of the fifteenth respectively. In his analysis of Jewish use of Greek, Bowman, following de Lange, argues strongly for evidence of ongoing interaction with the language on the part of Jews and discusses major pieces of evidence supporting this view. This section ends with a chapter from Alexander Panayotov. Drawing on his work for the Project on Jewish Communities of the Byzantine Empire, the chapter has the quality of a kind of gazetteer, gathering together extant epigraphic and archaeological evidence for Jews in the Byzantine empire to the twelfth century in the regions of the Balkans, the Aegean archipelago and Cyprus. The evidence, which is supported by relevant literary material, is often tantalizingly fragmentary, but it often shows that in the areas concerned Jews were a well-established presence in spite of the effect of anti-Jewish legislation.

Part II of the volume concerns the historiography of Jewish–Greek interaction. William Horbury discusses the legacy of de Lange's *Origen and the Jews*. After placing the work in its broader historiographic context, highlighting in particular its place in the burgeoning discussion at the time of its publication of Jewish–Christian interaction, Horbury shows how the book contributes to the subject of this volume, especially in pointing up areas where Origen's Greek reflects the language of the rabbis with whom he interacted as well as the latter's exegetical assumptions and procedures, and ongoing interest in the Greek Bible. Origen's work, according to Horbury, is an important witness to the Jewish–Greek tradition, a reminder 'that debate with Jews and enquiry from them could go hand in hand, and that Jewish–Christian relations were often relations between Christians and Jews who both spoke Greek'. This chapter is followed by a short, but suggestive, piece by Giuseppe Veltri in which changing attitudes to the study of the Jewish–Greek tradition are delineated and discussed. Veltri shows how, from the post-Reformation period,

Christian scholars sought to revive the idea that Hebrew wisdom was the foundation of Greek intellectual culture but how this view came under attack at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Veltri emphasizes how scholars came to assert the superiority of the Greek tradition, seeing it as the forerunner of a universalizing Christianity. Against this background he draws attention to the interest shown by the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement in the Jewish–Greek tradition and the diverse areas in which scholars such as Zunz, Geiger and Frankel located this. This work is contrasted with Christian scholarship of the same date, which had a more circumscribed vision of Jewish Hellenism. In some ways the implication of this chapter is that de Lange stands broadly within the tradition of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

There follows a section devoted to the Jewish–Greek tradition and the Bible. James Carleton Paget re-examines the much-discussed area of the origins of the Septuagint, showing how scholars have, by and large, rejected the *Letter of Aristeas* as a reliable indicator of its origins, for theories which are based upon the implications of the character of the Greek used by the translators of the Pentateuch, although many of these theories are subject to criticism. Carleton Paget concludes by suggesting that there are some indications that the original translation was collective in its inspiration, as implied by Aristeas, although involvement of a Ptolemaic monarch is probably unlikely. In a chapter which is partially complementary to Carleton Paget's, James Aitken examines the language of the translation of the Pentateuch. While partly sympathetic to the idea that the oddities of Septuagint Greek can be accounted for by reference to the Hebrew of which it is a translation, Aitken argues that the Greek also reflects the Koine which was prevalent at the time the translation was made, and is sceptical about the idea that the Septuagint witnesses to a Jewish form of Greek, sometimes called Judaeo-Greek. In analysing the social origins of the translators, Aitken draws attention to the way in which their Greek on occasion has a literary quality, betraying a degree of education in the Greek classics. Such 'literary' Greek is not a consistent presence in the translation, but its presence suggests that the translators had a comparable education to Egyptians who had been trained to draft administrative documents of various kinds, for in these we also have evidence of a combination of everyday and more literary Greek. As Aitken writes, 'The Septuagint translators are comparable to the more skilled of these Egyptian bureaucratic scribes, having not achieved the highest level of education, but having acquired enough rhetorical skills and learned enough of classical literature to use it in their work.'

Cameron Boyd-Taylor begins his contribution by arguing that the history of the Greek Bible amongst Jews should not be described by a 'narrative of crisis and rupture'. Rather scholars are now in a position to 'trace a continuous history of Jewish reception (of the Greek Bible) extending from Ptolemaic Alexandria to the fall of Constantinople'. Admitting that the evidence for such a history is fragmentary, Boyd-Taylor seeks to illustrate his contention through a detailed study of the Greek glosses attributed to a source called '*to Ioudaikon*', evidence for which is found both in Codex Ambrosianus and Ra 56. Concentrating on the glosses found in the former but confining his study to those which occur in Deuteronomy, Boyd-Taylor argues that there are enough idiosyncrasies in the translation to which the glosses give evidence to 'point to a source independent of Christian transmission history', and to imply the existence within Byzantine Judaism of an evolving tradition of free and colloquial translation into Greek with possibly ancient roots. Rounding off this section is a chapter by Julia Krivoruchko. She examines the question as to whether the Greek of the Constantinopolitan Pentateuch, Greek transliterated in Hebrew characters, should be taken as evidence for a medieval 'koine'. In a detailed discussion, Krivoruchko argues that the Greek of this text, and biblical Judaeo-Greek more generally, should be seen to reflect not a common spoken Greek, but one deeply affected by the Hebrew from which it was translated: a translationese that represented nobody's mother tongue.

The final part of the volume consists of a range of chapters charting the Greek element within Jewish 'culture'. The first of these, by Tessa Rajak, addresses the question of Philo's Hebrew etymologies and what their presence in his allegorical exegesis implies about his knowledge of Hebrew. Noting that in general scholars have argued that the etymologies derive from a mooted source (often assumed to be an *onomastikon*) or from some evolving tradition, and so prove no knowledge of Hebrew on Philo's part, Rajak suggests the opposite. Arguing that the debate touches upon a bevy of important issues running from the supposed opposition between Hebraism and Hellenism to the question of Jewish identity in Alexandria, Rajak shows that none of the arguments usually arraigned against Philo's knowledge of Hebrew as this pertains to the etymologies are decisive. True, there are no compelling arguments on the other side but scholars should be more open to the possibility that the etymologies in Philo, some of which are unique to him, and many of which are more than an adornment to his exegesis, imply a knowledge of the language of Shem on the part of this Platonizing Jew. Francis Schmidt's contribution continues the Philonic theme, here looking at Philo's use in his exegesis

of the technical term *semeion*, connected with Stoic thought. He shows how, in its capacity as a springboard or *aphorme* towards figurative interpretation, the term acts as a link connecting literal and allegorical exegesis. Schmidt notes that its usage is found in Philo's *Historica* rather than his *Nomothetica*, something which should not surprise us.

There then follow two chapters which discuss archaeological evidence for Jews in the late antique period. In the first of these, David Noy examines the problem of identifying a building as a Jewish synagogue, noting that such identification is normally demonstrated through finding a Jewish inscription *in situ* or evidence of a distinctive piece of Jewish iconography, such as a menorah or lulav. Even where, however, such evidence is forthcoming (and that is the case only after 100 CE), Noy notes that ambiguity can still exist. He proceeds to examine four sites which have been held to be Jewish synagogues (Delos, Ostia, Apamea and Mopsuestia), showing how fragile the evidence for such an identification in fact is and suggesting that there is no such thing as a distinctive Jewish architecture.

> Because the Jews in classical and late antiquity were not a separate or homogenized group, tracing them through archaeology can never be an exact science. Instead, the shared patterns of architecture and decoration, produced in many cases by the same artisans and workshops, provide room for doubt about what is or is not a synagogue, doubt which only exists as a result of a material culture which was not fundamentally different for pagans, Christians and Jews.

In a piece devoted to the epigraphic footprint of Jews in the ancient world, Pieter van der Horst, after a review of the historiography of this subject, discusses the multiple ways in which inscriptions both complement, and especially, supplement, our knowledge, of Jewish life in the ancient and Byzantine worlds. So, *inter alia*, they give us information about the extent of the diaspora, Jewish names, the average age of death, and the existence of a Judaism which seems unaffected by rabbinic Judaism. Most importantly, perhaps, the inscriptions, the majority of which are preserved in Greek, contradict the view that Jewish culture expressed in that language ended in the first century CE as was once uncritically contended.

Philip Alexander examines the question of rabbinic attitudes to Greek, especially the Greek Bible. In a general discussion of Rabbinic attitudes to translation he notes a spectrum of opinions, but a clear view that no translation was deemed as equivalent of the Hebrew original. He then shows how, by and large, rabbinic knowledge of Greek was limited, and that this in part accounts for the relative absence of knowledge of the Greek Bible in literature associated with the Rabbis. But he also highlights evidence of

a growing negative attitude to the Greek Bible on the part of the Rabbis and argues that this was strongly influenced by the rise of Christianity with its reliance upon the Septuagint in particular. He is clear, however, that the Rabbis may have attempted to influence the western diaspora through the Greek recension associated with Aquila, which he tentatively ascribes to their patronage. He also asserts that there is evidence of Greek-speaking communities in the medieval west who, though rabbinized, retained some knowledge of Aquila and Greek versions, which they used to gloss the original evidence of a murky world of what he takes to be uneasy contact between Hellenism and Judaism. In the next contribution, Gideon Bohak shows how investigation of evidence relating to magic reveals different types of encounters between Hebrew (and, more rarely, Aramaic) and Greek, including both bilingual and trilingual texts and texts that use one writing system to transliterate phrases in the other language. He argues that this material elucidates such subjects as the use of the Hebrew Bible among the Jews of the diaspora in the Roman Empire, and the transliteration of biblical verses in Greek letters as practised by these Jews, as well as opening up questions of intercultural relations especially as these occurred at what Bohak terms 'ground level'.

Wout van Bekkum's contribution on piyyutim is partly an attempt to elucidate the origins of a form of religious Jewish poetry which may have been influenced by developing forms of the same amongst Christians. Probably emerging in Palestine in the fifth century, this literary form, whose name may derive from the Greek word for a poet or poetry (*poiētēs* or *poiēsis* respectively), was probably the product of cantor poets. Van Bekkum examines a piyyut, written by the possibly late fifth-/early sixth-century poet Yehudah. Providing his own translation, van Bekkum plays up the importance to the poet of biblical allusion, the way in which he interacts freely with the biblical tradition, and evidence that the poem possessed didactic and instructional aspirations. But van Bekkum is also clear that the work had a literary purpose, and, more importantly, a wider audience in mind, giving us a vital insight into the ethos of the Byzantine Jewish communities for which the poems were written. '*Piyyut* as poetry deserves to be explored and studied as one of the major literary expressions of Judaism and Jewish existence over the course of many centuries', he concludes. The final Chapter in the collection, by Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, discusses fourteen fragments from the Cairo Genizah taken from nine different Hebrew codices, all of which are palimpsests in Hebrew. These are written over what would seem in the main to be Christian Greek texts of various kinds, ranging from passages taken from

the New Testament to martyrological texts to hexaplaric ones. Olszowy-Schlanger argues that the script of the palimpsests is a distinctive sub-type of the oriental square script, which may well pre-date most of the texts held in the Genizah. She concludes tentatively, on the basis of the Greek sub-text, that the palimpsests are from Egypt, and reflect a multilingual setting in which Greek played an important part.

These chapters can only serve as the beginning of a more comprehensive analysis of the subject of Jews and Greek 'culture'. The hope is, however, that they touch upon many of the main themes relating to that subject and act as a springboard for further study and engagement with a vitally important aspect of *Judaica*.

PART I

History

CHAPTER 2

Jews and Graeco-Roman culture
From Alexander to Theodosius II

Günter Stemberger

Greek culture and way of life had exerted its influence on the western territories of the Persian Empire, including Palestine, long before the conquests of Alexander. Greek merchants settled down at Akko and in other coastal cities of Palestine, while Greek mercenaries were employed in the Persian army and in Phoenician cities; Greek coins circulated, Greek ceramics and other luxury goods were regularly imported; the Greek language was understood by at least those in the higher levels of administration and overseas commerce. But there was a qualitative difference which distinguished the Greek influence in the region in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE from the time after Alexander.

1 From Alexander the Great to 70 CE

1.1 Palestine from Alexander to Pompey

After his victory at Issos (333 BCE), Alexander the Great marched down the Phoenician and Palestinian coast in the direction of Egypt, thereby coming into contact with Jews. According to Josephus (*Ant.* 11.325–47) Alexander, having conquered Gaza, wanted to go up to Jerusalem (according to non-Jewish sources he went directly to Egypt); the high priest Jaddus, dressed in his priestly vestments and accompanied by priests and citizens, went out to greet the conqueror and was well received by Alexander, who promised that the Jews could continue to live by their own laws, even if they wanted to join his army – an offer that many accepted. In explaining why Alexander prostrated himself before the high priest of the Jews, Josephus attributes these words to him: ‘It was not before him that I prostrated myself but the God of whom he has the honour to be high priest’; Alexander, noting that while he was still in Macedonia, he had seen the high priest in his sleep, concludes, ‘He himself would lead my army and give over to me the empire of the Persians’ (333–4, translation LCL). This

story does not depict historical facts – Alexander never visited Jerusalem; but it reflects the positive view of Alexander and the new political order introduced by him in the Jewish source used by Josephus.[1]

After Alexander's death in 323, none of his generals could gain dominance. After years of internal strife, the territories conquered by Alexander were divided among them, the 'successors' (*diadochoi*), the Seleucids taking Asia, the Ptolemies Egypt. Palestine was at first part of the Egyptian Empire according to the historian Agatharchides of Cnidus (early second century BCE). Ptolemy I took Jerusalem without Jewish resistance owing to the Sabbath, perhaps in 312, or more likely in 302 BCE (Josephus, *Ag. Ap*. 1.209–11).[2]

Throughout the period of Ptolemaic rule, the Ptolemies hardly interfered with this province as long as the taxes were paid promptly. The most important source of information for Palestine in this period is the Zenon Papyri, some of which are documents collected by an Egyptian official during a journey through Palestine in 259 BCE. These are supplemented by Josephus' 'Tobiad romance' (*Ant*. 12.154–236) about Joseph son of Tobiah, a member of a rich aristocratic dynasty in the service of the Ptolemies and connected by marriage with the high-priestly family. These texts and the archaeological excavations of Araq el-Emir, the fortress of the Tobiads east of the Jordan, show the considerable degree of Hellenization in the highest circles of Jewish society of the period.

The situation, including the wide acceptance of Hellenistic culture, began to change when, after preceding attempts, the Seleucids succeeded in attaching Palestine to their territory as a result of their defeat of a Ptolemaic army at the battle of Paneas in 200 BCE (cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 12.129–37, quoting Polybius). At first, Antiochus III is said to have promised to support the upkeep of the temple cult in Jerusalem, including the exemption of the *gerousia*, the priests and other temple personnel, from the poll-tax, the crown-tax and the salt-tax; by royal proclamation, foreigners were forbidden to enter the inner precincts of the temple or to bring impure animals or their hides into Jerusalem (*Ant*. 12.138–46). But the situation soon deteriorated when Antiochus' son Seleucus IV (187–175 BCE) attempted to plunder the treasures of the Jerusalem Temple (2 Maccabees 3), perhaps to raise part of the tribute he had to pay to Rome.

[1] Cf. Cohen 1982 = 2010. In the Talmud, *b. Yoma* 69a, the encounter between Alexander and the high priest takes place not near Jerusalem, but in Kefar Saba (Antipatris) on the coastal plain, thus on the expected route of the conqueror.

[2] See Barclay 2007, 119 n. 710.

Tensions between the families of the high priest and the Tobiads, between supporters of the Seleucids and of the Ptolemies, led to a crisis under Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BCE). Jason paid the king a huge amount of money in order to be installed as high priest in place of his brother Onias and so he was given permission to found in Jerusalem, 'a gymnasium and *ephebeion* and to register the people of Jerusalem as Antiochenes. When he got royal approval and took control of the government, he immediately brought his coreligionists over to the Greek style … And there was such an apogee of Hellenism and inroad of foreignism' that the priests neglected the cult and hurried to the palaestra; 'considering the ancestral values to be worthless, they considered the Greek honors to be the best' (2 Macc. 4:9–15, transl. D. Schwartz). A few years later, Menelaus (not a member of the Zadokite family from which traditionally the high priests came) replaced Jason as high priest after promising Antiochus an even larger sum of money than Jason had done. When Jason tried to regain his position with military force, Antiochus, on his return from Egypt, conquered Jerusalem, plundered the temple and stationed a foreign garrison in the city (2 Macc. 5). Soon afterwards, in December 167, the king forced the Jews to abandon central laws of their religion. The temple was defiled and its name changed to 'of Zeus Olympios' (2 Macc. 6:1–9; 1 Macc. 1:54 speaks of 'an abomination of desolation built upon the altar'). These events resulted in the uprising of the Maccabees, who three years later conquered Jerusalem and reconsecrated the temple. Exploiting struggles for power among the Seleucids, the Maccabee Jonathan gained recognition as ruler of Jerusalem, somewhat later also as high priest. His younger brother Simon was proclaimed by an assembly of the people, priests, chiefs of the nation and elders as 'chief and high priest in perpetuity until a true prophet shall arise' (1 Macc. 14:41; cf. 14:47).

Interpreting these events is difficult. The persecution of the Jewish religion is unprecedented. Many historians assume that Antiochus wanted to strengthen his faltering kingdom by imposing a common Hellenistic culture. Although some Jews shared this tendency, more conservative circles, along with the great majority of the Jewish people, resisted it when it seemed to go too far. When the situation got out of hand, the king saw no other possibility than to prohibit the practice of the Jewish religion. This explanation is still very popular. A very different explanation is presented by Bickerman, followed most prominently by Hengel. The people responsible for the escalation were extreme Jewish Hellenists who tried to introduce an enlightened Reform Judaism without circumcision and dietary laws. They did not accept the resistance of the conservative Jews and

resorted to forcing the latter to convert to the new form of their religion. To achieve their goal, they secured the support of the secular power of the Seleucids. As a consequence, 'the wrath of the Maccabees was poured over the Jews and not the heathen … the struggle of the Maccabees turn[ed] into a civil war within the Jewish people'.[3] The first position coheres more obviously with our sources (1 and 2 Maccabees; Josephus) which represent the viewpoint of the victorious group. It is Bickerman's achievement to have emphasized the inner-Jewish tensions which greatly contributed to the course of events, but to have explained them only in part.

The Maccabean victory did not lead, as might be expected, to a reversal of the Hellenization of Jewish Palestine; on the contrary. In order to obtain a measure of independence, the Maccabees and their descendants, the Hasmonean dynasty, had to seek contacts with the powers of their time, most prominently with the Romans. Judas Maccabaeus is said to have sent an embassy to Rome to establish ties of alliance with the Romans, an offer accepted by the Roman senate (1 Macc. 8); Jonathan also sent an embassy to Rome to confirm and renew the treaty (see also 2 Macc. 11:34–8, 'one of the earliest pieces of evidence for Roman interference in Seleucid affairs'[4]). Even more interesting is the letter Jonathan is reported to have sent to Sparta, claiming that both Spartans and Jews are descended from Abraham (1 Macc. 12:1–23; Josephus, *Ant.* 13.163–70). In 139 Antiochus VII granted Simon the right to strike his own coinage (1 Macc. 15:6), but there is no evidence that he ever used this right. The first Hasmonean to strike coins was John Hyrcanus I (135–104), whose coins bear the Hebrew inscription 'Yehohanan the High Priest and the council of the Jews'. Alexander Jannaeus (103–76), however, preferred the Greek inscription 'of Alexander the king', replicated in Hebrew on the reverse, whereas on other coins we find only the Hebrew inscription 'Yonatan the High Priest and the council of the Jews'.[5] The Greek inscriptions with the royal title and the Greek name clearly express the wish to be seen as a Hellenistic ruler and not simply as high priest who shared his power with a council; most symbols on the coins (wreath, anchor, star and lily) follow Hellenistic tradition – only the palm branch (*lulav*) is specifically Jewish. Aristobulus during his short reign (104–103) even took the title of Philhellene (*Ant.* 13.318).

Already early in his reign, John Hyrcanus I 'became the first Jewish king to support foreign troops' (*Ant.* 13.249; cf. *War* 1.61), recruiting Cilician

[3] Bickerman 1962, 101. Hengel 1988, 486–564; discussion of Bickerman's thesis, 535–49. For a different position, see Gruen 1998.

[4] Schwartz 2008, 397. [5] Meshorer 2001, 23–42.

and Pisidian mercenaries, but not Syrians with whom he was at war (*Ant*. 13.374). In the civil war part of the Jewish population called upon the Seleucid king Demetrius III Akairos (95–88)[6] to assist them. When his troops confronted those of Alexander, he attempted to force the Jews who were on Demetrius' side to desert, while Demetrius sought 'to cause Alexander's mercenaries to desert because they were Greeks' (*Ant*. 13.378). Even Salome Alexandra (76–67), who ended the civil war and brought about reconciliation with the Pharisees,[7] 'recruited a large force of mercenaries … with the result that she struck terror into the local rulers round her and received hostages from them' (*Ant*. 13.409). In making mercenaries a constant element in the standing army, 'the Hasmonaeans adopted the norms of Hellenistic armies, and their army ceased to be purely national'.[8] This development makes clear that it was not Hellenism as such which was opposed by the Maccabees, but rather its excesses which had threatened traditional Jewish life. Elias Bickerman sums up:

> The reform party wished to assimilate the Torah to Hellenism; the Maccabees wished to incorporate Hellenic culture in the Tora … This accommodation of new elements to the Bible … characterizes the Hellenization carried through under the Maccabees, and differentiates it from the rationalistic assimilation which had been the aim of the reform party.[9]

1.2 The religious schools of the period

The Pharisees with whom Alexandra sided were one of the three traditional schools in Judaism besides the Sadducees and the Essenes, as described by Josephus. The pre-history of these schools is normally traced back to the time of the Maccabees, based on Josephus who mentions them in *Ant*. 13.171–3 in his version of 1 Maccabees 12, in the time of the high priest Jonathan (161–143). But there they play no historical role; the passage about them is inserted without real connection with the context. It is from Alexander Jannaeus onwards that the Pharisees and the Sadducees really enter history; and the settlement at Qumran is also well attested at this time. Josephus, in view of his non-Jewish readers, presents all three schools in Hellenistic terminology. Modern scholarship frequently regards

[6] Akairos, 'the untimely one', is his nickname, as attested by Josephus; later editions of Josephus change it to Eukairos, 'the timely one'. See Levenson and Martin 2009.

[7] In his account of Alexander Jannaeus, Josephus never mentions the Pharisees as Alexander's opponents. But it is generally assumed that they had called Demetrius to assist them, as may be confirmed by the Nahum Pesher from Qumran (4Q169 3–4 I 2).

[8] Shatzman 1991, 32. [9] Bickerman 1962, 156–7.

the Sadducees, who mainly represented the traditional priesthood, as the most profoundly Hellenized movement, a moderate continuation of the Hellenizers around Jason. Since Josephus writes that the Sadducees 'do away with Fate altogether, and remove God beyond, not merely the commission, but the very sight, of evil' (*War* 2.164; cf. *Ant*. 13.173), they are frequently seen as Epicureans to whom Josephus (*Ant*. 10.278) ascribes a similar position regarding providence. Confirmation of this equation is seen in the fact that the Sadducees are said not to believe in the survival of the soul after death nor in punishments and rewards in Hades (*War* 2.165; *Ant*. 18.16). But providence and fate are not the same; the Sadducees, as described by Josephus, 'denied fate but not providence'.[10] As to the denial of a survival of the soul, it might be compared to Epicurean views, but here again the comparison may be overdrawn – what exactly the Sadducees thought about a possible life after death, we do not know.[11] Josephus himself never explicitly compares the Sadducees with the Epicureans. Since many Sadducees belonged to the priestly aristocracy and the richer part of the Jewish population, it is probable that at least in their material culture, perhaps also in other aspects, they were more thoroughly Hellenized than the rural population; but clear information is lacking.

As to the Pharisees, Josephus emphasizes their adherence to the traditions of the fathers; but this does not imply that they were immune to Hellenistic influences. Josephus explicitly says that the school of the Pharisees 'is like the one called Stoic among the Greeks' (*Life* 12), probably referring to their similar views on fate and free will. The Pharisees 'postulate that everything is brought about by fate, still they do not deprive the human will of the pursuit of what is in man's power, since it was God's good pleasure that there should be a fusion and that the will of man with his virtue and vice should be admitted to the council-chamber of fate' (*Ant*. 18.13, LCL). This position (repeated with slight differences in *War* 2.162 and *Ant*. 13.172–3) is close to Stoic ideas (the view 'that determinism [or fate] and free will are not contradictory but compatible').[12] Josephus clearly adapts the Pharisaic position on life after death to ideas familiar to his Greek readers: they believe 'that souls have the power to survive death … eternal imprisonment is the lot of evil souls, while the good souls receive an easy passage to a new life' (*Ant*. 18.14; cf. *War* 2.163). The Pharisaic doctrine of resurrection is transformed into one of immortality

[10] Klawans 2012, 83. Cf. p. 63, where Klawans rightly refuses to fill in the blank about Sadducees/Epicureans that Josephus left empty.

[11] Klawans 2012, 101–6.

[12] See Klawans 2012, 44–91, especially 75–9 (for an explanation of the term: 48).

and of transmigration of the soul or reincarnation.[13] Whatever the overall correctness of this description, the dualism of body and soul, present in both forms of thought, is a Hellenistic transformation of the older biblical monistic anthropology.

As to the Essenes, Josephus compares them to the Pythagoreans (*Ant*. 15.371). There are, indeed, a number of significant parallels between the ideals and way of life of the Pythagoreans and those of the Essenes as described by Philo (in his case, also with the Therapeutae) and Josephus – community of life and goods, insistence on purity, prohibition of oaths, white garments, common meals, etc. – although there are also notable differences, and the same may be said, although to a lesser extent, of the community of Qumran. In a more general way, there are parallels between the organization of the Qumran community and Greek voluntary organizations of which Pythagorean communities are a specific example.[14] For non-Jewish authors, such as Pliny the Elder, Porphyry and Dio Chrysostom, who showed a special interest in the Essenes, they were a community of philosophers.[15] The texts of Qumran show certain parallels with Hellenistic ideas and interests (such as in the field of astrology). Greek fragments of the Septuagint and other unidentified Greek works have been found at Qumran. It is all the more significant that the Qumran texts avoid all Greek loan-words common in their time, and so demonstrate their independence from foreign influences.[16]

1.3 Palestine from Pompey to 70 CE

The fight for power between the sons of Salome Alexandra, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, their appeal to Pompey (who was then resident in Damascus, preparing a campaign against the Nabateans) for arbitration and their subsequent non-compliance with Pompey's ruling led to Pompey's march on Jerusalem and the capture of the city and the temple in 63 BCE (*War* 1.127–54; *Ant*. 14.34–76). 'And he made Jerusalem tributary to the Romans' (*War* 1.74), but refrained from annexing the country although it was now under strict supervision by the Roman legate in Syria.

> Of all the calamities of that time none so deeply affected the nation as the exposure to alien eyes of the Holy Place, hitherto screened from view. Pompey indeed, along with his staff, penetrated to the sanctuary … and

[13] Klawans 2012, 100–15. [14] See Taylor 2004; Weinfeld 1986.
[15] Vermes and Goodman 1989; see, more generally, Hengel 1988, 394–442.
[16] Richey 2012 (literature cited there); Joosten 2010.

> beheld what it contained … However, he touched neither these nor any other of the sacred treasures and, the very day after the capture of the temple, gave orders to the custodians to cleanse it and to resume the customary sacrifices. (Josephus, *War* 1.153)

Pompey's entry into the temple must have been an enormous shock to the people, reminding them, in spite of Pompey's respectful behaviour, of the desecration of the sanctuary under Antiochus IV. The Psalms of Solomon, a few years after the events, bitterly complain: 'Foreign nations went up to your altar and trampled it proudly without removing their shoes' (*Pss. Sol.* 2:2; cf. 8:14–22; 17:11–18). Later, the Rabbis tell a version of this episode as the reason behind the decree of the Mishnah (*m. Soṭ.* 9:14) 'that a man should not teach Greek to his son':

> When the kings of the Hasmonean house fought one another, Hyrcanus was outside and Aristobulus was inside [Jerusalem]. Every day [the people inside] would lower a basket of denars, and those outside would raise up animals for the daily whole-offering. There was there [among the besieging forces] an elder, who was familiar with Greek learning. He spoke with them concerning Greek learning, saying to them, 'So long as they carry out the Temple service, they will not be given over into your hands.'
>
> The next day when the insiders lowered a basket of denars, the outsiders sent up a pig. When the pig got half way up the wall, it dug its hoof into the wall. The land of Israel quaked and moved four hundred parasangs. At that time they ruled, 'It is forbidden for someone to raise pigs, and it is forbidden for anyone to teach Greek learning to his son'. (*b. Soṭ.* 49b, trans. J. Neusner)

Whereas the Mishnah speaks of the Greek language, the Babylonian anecdote speaks of Greek culture (literally, 'Greek wisdom'), the knowledge of which leads to the betrayal of a central Jewish secret, that the Jews are invincible as long as they carry out the temple service. To forbid the Greek language no longer makes sense to Rabbis living in a world where everybody has to know it; but the adoption of Greek culture is still seen, at least by some rabbis, as a danger to Jewish adherence to the central commandments of the Torah. This is, of course, a much later interpretation, but it gives eloquent expression to the view that the Roman conquest of Jerusalem and its at first indirect and later direct control of the country brought about a cultural change that in the long run might be dangerous to Jewish life.

The Idumaean Antipater, whose father had been appointed governor of Idumaea by Alexander Jannaeus, had tried to exert his influence under the weak king Hyrcanus before Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem and political

reorganization of the region. Antipater knew how to make himself useful to the Romans who eventually named him 'governor (ἐπιμελητής) of the Jews' while he was still serving at the court of Hyrcanus (*Ant.* 14.127), and finally 'procurator (ἐπίτροπος) of Judaea' (14.143), whereas Hyrcanus was reduced to the position of high priest. Antipater's son Herod, already governor of Galilee under his father, after Antipater's death and an intense power struggle in Jerusalem, was named king by Antony and confirmed by the Roman senate in 40 BCE (14.386–9), but was only able to take possession of Jerusalem three years later with the help of Roman troops.

As king of Judaea, Herod sought to strike a balance between his allegiance to Judaism and his efforts to be recognized in the Roman world. The transformation of the country under his rule became most visible through his many building projects.[17] Best known is his rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem. Although the central structures follow the traditional plan, the large outer courts with their splendid colonnades and porticoes gave the temple a fully Hellenistic appearance (*War* 5.184–227; *Ant.* 15.380–425). The appearance of the city was also transformed by the fortress Antonia (*War* 5.238–46) and Herod's main palace (*War* 5.156–83), as well as by the theatre and amphitheatre Herod built in Jerusalem, 'both being spectacularly lavish but foreign to Jewish custom' (*Ant.* 15.268). Other such sports and entertainment facilities were built outside Jerusalem where Herod felt less constrained by Jewish customs (a hippodrome in Jericho, a stadium in Sebaste where he also built a temple dedicated to Caesar Augustus). His most significant undertaking was the planning and construction of the new city of Caesarea Maritima, following Hellenistic patterns with an orthogonal street grid, a temple dedicated to Augustus and Roma, public buildings and markets as well as a theatre and a hippodrome, and a technically highly advanced new harbour.[18]

After Herod's death in 4 BCE his kingdom was divided among his three sons, but Archelaus who received Judaea, was deposed and exiled in 6 CE, when the country was transformed into a Roman province. This provoked the Galilean Judas to found his own movement of opposition that recognized no other ruler but God alone (*War* 2.118) and for this reason resisted all Roman taxation, an act of opposition against all foreign influences, both political and cultural. This and similar movements formed an important current within Judaean politics for the next decades when the discontent with the Roman administration kept growing and finally led

[17] Netzer 2006. [18] See Netzer 2006, 94–118.

to the outbreak of the war against Rome in 66 CE, which ended with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.[19]

1.4 The diaspora until 70 CE

A Jewish diaspora had existed at least since the Babylonian exile, not only in Babylonia but also in Egypt (Elephantine). Under Ptolemy I, Jews were settled in the newly founded city of Alexandria and were soon to be found all over the country. In Leontopolis in Lower Egypt, around 160 BCE, Onias IV founded a Jewish military colony with its own temple, which was closed only in 73 CE. Well documented by many papyri is the Jewish community of Heracleopolis;[20] other Jewish centres could be found in the oasis Fayyum, in Oxyrhynchus and Edfu in Upper Egypt. Other important centres of the diaspora were Syria with its capital Antioch where Seleucus I is said to have settled Jews (Josephus, *War* 7.43; *Ant.* 12.119–24), and Asia Minor where Antiochus III had transported 2,000 Jewish families from Babylonia and Mesopotamia *c.* 200 BCE as military colonists (*Ant.* 12.147–53); Jewish presence all over the region is attested in 1 Macc. 15:22–3, in the lawsuit against Flaccus who was accused of having unlawfully confiscated Jewish money (the temple tax) while governor of the province of Asia in 62 BCE (Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 68), and also by Philo (*Leg.* 245) and the New Testament (Acts 2). Rome attracted Jews already in the second century. Pompey brought Jews as slaves after his conquest of Jerusalem, although many of them were released (Philo, *Leg.* 155) and joined the Jewish community so that many Jews attended the lawsuit against Flaccus (Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 28; 66–9). Expulsions of the Jews from Rome in the years 14 and 41 or 49 CE had only limited and temporary effects. Strabo, as quoted by Josephus (*Ant.* 14.115), sums up: 'This people has already made its way into every city, and it is not easy to find any place in the inhabited world which has not received this nation and in which it has not made its power felt' (cf. also Philo, *Leg.* 281–2).

Jewish communities in the diaspora were always centred on synagogues, first attested by inscriptions from Egypt from the third century BCE (synagogue of Schedia, dedicated on behalf of the king Ptolemy and the queen Berenice).[21] Greek became the language among diaspora Jews who quickly lost knowledge of Hebrew; thus, the Torah, and then the whole Bible, had to be translated for the liturgical reading in the synagogue – certainly

[19] For a different interpretation of the causes of the revolt, see Goodman 2007.
[20] Cowey and Maresch 2001. [21] Horbury and Noy 1992, 22.

one of the main reasons for the creation of the Septuagint from the third century.[22]

Josephus claims that Seleucus I granted the Jews in Antiochia and the other cities founded by him equal citizen rights to those of the Greeks (*Ant.* 12.119; cf. *Ag. Ap.* 2.39; *War* 7.44 attributes this to the successors of Antiochus IV). Similar claims are made for the Jews of Alexandria where, however, their exact political status remains unclear. Jews sought to enrol their sons among the *epheboi*, to acquire a gymnasium education which gave them knowledge of Greek literature and culture and training in gymnastic exercises – a precondition for access to full civil rights and for dispensation from the *laographia*, a tax imposed on the non-Greek local inhabitants. They aspired to equal citizenship, *isopoliteia*. It is, however, not clear whether this implied full Alexandrian citizenship or simply an equivalent citizenship within their own *politeuma*. Tensions with the Greek community of Alexandria over these rights led to the outbreak of riots in 38 CE, a persecution of the Jews, and a final ruling on the matter by the emperor Claudius who commanded the Alexandrians to allow the Jews to keep their own ways, but also ordered the Jews 'not to intrude themselves into the games presided over by the *gymnasiarchoi* and the *kosmetai*, since they enjoy what is their own, and in a city which is not their own they possess an abundance of all good things'.[23] In spite of this settlement, tensions continued in Alexandria and led to expressions of anti-Judaism.[24] Generally, however, Jews within the Roman Empire had been explicitly allowed to pursue their own lifestyle[25] since the time of Julius Caesar and seem to have maintained reasonably good relations with their neighbours, adapting themselves to their environment and the dominant culture of the countries where they lived.

1.5 Greek and Latin authors on Judaism

As a consequence of the expansion of the Jewish diaspora, Greek authors soon became aware of Jews and their particular lifestyle. Some idealized them.[26] Theophrastus, a disciple of Aristotle, as quoted by Porphyry, calls the Jews 'philosophers by birth'. Clearchus of Soli, quoting his master

[22] On this see Carleton Paget in this volume.

[23] Text and translation: Tcherikover 1957–64, II 41.43. On the events see Tcherikover, I: 25–78, and Gambetti 2009.

[24] Schäfer 1997. [25] Pucci Ben Zeev 1998.

[26] For the texts see Stern 1974–84. See also Bar-Kochva 2010; Hengel 1988, 464–86; Feldman 1993, 177–287.

Aristotle, speaks of an encounter with a Judean in Asia who 'was Greek not only in his speech but also in his soul', and calls the Judeans in general 'descendants of the philosophers in India' (Josephus, *Ag. Ap*. 1.177–81). Hecataeus of Abdera (quoted by Diodorus Siculus 40.3.3–8), slightly later, describes Moses as a philosopher-king who gave the Jews their laws, political institutions and religious rituals. Josephus (*Ag. Ap*. 1.183–205) ascribes to Hecataeus a whole book in praise of the Jews from which he quotes at length. It is now generally accepted that this text is much later (late second century BCE), and it is most likely that Pseudo-Hecataeus was not even a Greek historian, but an Alexandrian Jew.[27]

There is also a long tradition of hostile statements against Jews and Judaism, many of them transmitted by Josephus who states that 'it was Egyptians who initiated the slanders against us' (*Ag. Ap*. 1.223). First among them he discusses Manetho (third century BCE: *Ag. Ap*. 1.227–87), according to whom the Jews were lepers expelled from Egypt, a motif used by writers until the time of Tacitus and beyond. Josephus quotes the assertion of his older contemporary Apion (in 38 CE a member of the Alexandrian embassy to Rome) that the Jews worship the head of an ass (*Ag. Ap*. 2.80), an idea of probably Egyptian origin that might go back to Mnaseas of Patara (*c*. 200 BCE: *Ag. Ap*. 2.114).[28] Jews were also accused of separatism. Already Hecataeus of Abdera, generally positive toward Judaism, calls their mode of life 'hostile to foreigners' (*misoxenon*) and 'inhuman' (*apanthrōpon*: Diodorus 40.3.4). Apollonius Molon (first century BCE) collects all kinds of accusations against the Jews: 'in fact he first insults us as atheists and misanthropes, and then reproaches us for cowardice … He says we are also the most untalented of barbarians and for this reason the only ones to have contributed no invention of use to human life' (*Ag. Ap*. 2.148).[29] Such anti-Jewish attitudes contributed to the outbreak of the pogrom in Alexandria in the year 38 CE and found its literary reflection in the *Acts of the Alexandrian Martyrs*.[30] In Rome anti-Jewish statements become more frequent from the middle of the first century CE and show the partial influence of the Egyptian Apion in Rome, but were also furthered by the Jewish War against Rome.

[27] Bar-Kochva 1996. [28] Stern 1974–84, 1: 97–8, 141–7; Schäfer 1997, 55–65.
[29] See Feldman 1993, 107–76.
[30] Musurillo 2000; Tcherikover 1957–64, 2, 55–107. Gambetti 2009, 195–212.

1.6 Jewish–Greek literature

The translation of the Torah into Greek may be regarded as the beginning of Jewish–Greek literature. Most, if not all, of this literature (except Josephus) was written in Egypt, mainly in Alexandria. A whole corpus of texts, partly translated from Hebrew (as the Wisdom of Ben Sira), but for the greater part originally written in Greek (as the books of the Maccabees or the Wisdom of Solomon), finally became part of the Greek Bible. Other texts used biblical motifs for new literary genres, as the novel *Joseph and Aseneth*, about the daughter of an Egyptian priest who falls in love with Joseph and after many obstacles marries him. The novel is based on Genesis 37–50, but also has much in common with Greek romances (e.g., Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe*). Other examples of adapting Greek literary genres to biblical topics are epic poems in hexameters by Theodotos and Philo the Epic Poet, the presentation of the exodus as a tragic drama by Ezekiel the Tragedian, and the didactic-moral *Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*. These and many other works survive only in fragmentary quotations cited by later authors, mainly Eusebius. In a later period, there apparently was no longer any real interest in this kind of Jewish–Greek literature.[31]

A highly important aspect of Jewish–Greek literature was allegorical interpretation, common in the interpretation of Homer and of Greek mythology more generally. It became central in attempts to create a symbiosis between biblical and Hellenistic culture. Already Aristobulus (mid-second century BCE), whose work is very fragmentarily preserved, argued that one should not take the biblical texts literally and not accept a mythical, anthropomorphic understanding of God. Using common words, Moses 'actually speaks about "natural" conditions and structures of a higher order' (fragm. 2, Holladay 3, 137). 'And the whole structure of our law has been drawn up with concern for piety, justice, self-control, and other qualities that are truly good' (fragm. 4, Holladay 3, 175). The biblical law thus perfectly conforms to the Hellenistic conception of virtue, an idea later expanded in the *Letter of Aristeas*.

This programme was systematically realized by Philo of Alexandria in the first half of the first century CE in his commentaries on the Torah. For him, the Decalogue corresponds with the ten categories of Aristotle; it comprises the whole existing world and agrees with the laws of nature.

[31] Holladay 1983–96, presents a richly annotated collection of texts and translations with introductions and commentaries.

All particular biblical laws stand in close relation with the Decalogue and must be understood allegorically; they symbolize a higher reality, but have to be observed literally as well (*Migr.* 93). This co-existence of literal and allegorical understanding is valid for the narrative sections of the Torah also. They are important for Jewish identity, but at the same time also transmit deeper philosophical insights accessible only to the inspired interpreter and reserved for a small elite. Philo's work has been abundantly researched, but many questions remain. Some regard Philo as an eclectic philosopher with little originality, whereas others value him as a highly original and important philosophical interpreter. The precise origin of many of his ideas is still disputed, as are also the greater context of his interpretations, the nature of his relationship with the Jewish community of Alexandria and his influence on Jewish thinking in his time. For some he was an outsider, perhaps a follower of a mystically oriented Judaism, for others a true representative of his community who perhaps even presented his interpretations in the synagogues. An answer to these and similar questions might contribute to a better understanding of the extent of the Hellenization of the Alexandrian Jewish community. This community was nearly extinguished in the diaspora revolt of the early second century, and Philo's work was no longer preserved within Judaism; his allegorical exegesis was continued by Christian exegetes like Clement of Alexandria and Origen.[32]

The only Palestinian Jew who contributed significantly to Greek literature was Flavius Josephus who lived after 70 CE in Rome where he wrote his works. His *Jewish Antiquities* in twenty books seems to follow the example of the *Roman Antiquities* by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, written in Rome about a century before him. In the earlier parts of this work, Josephus largely follows the biblical sources, but it is wrong to consider his work as a simple retelling of the Bible. Recent research has not only shown in detail many exegetical traditions which he incorporated in his work, but also the extent to which he transformed the presentation of biblical heroes in conformity with Hellenistic ideals of external qualities and the four cardinal virtues. In the case of Moses, his characterization as lawgiver has parallels in Plutarch's presentation of Lycurgus.[33] The *Jewish Antiquities* as well as the earlier *Jewish War*, for which Josephus still needed the aid of Greek assistants, qualify Josephus as the only true

[32] The literature on Philo is immense; a bibliography is found in *The Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*. Brown Judaic Studies; Providence, RI: Brown University; later volumes: SBL, Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1989–.

[33] Feldman 1998; Feldman 2006, 103–33, 313–759 (the comparison with Plutarch, 523–56).

Jewish historian according to Greek criteria. In his apologia of Judaism, *Against Apion*, he presented Judaism to his Roman readers in Greek garb, and demonstrated his good knowledge of Greek literature (many works quoted by him have survived only through his quotations). But, as was the case with Philo, Josephus had no Jewish follower and his works survived only in Christian tradition. The tradition of Jewish–Greek literature more or less ended with him and was revived only much later.[34]

2 From 70 CE to the Theodosian Code

2.1 Palestine

The Jewish defeat by Titus and the destruction of the temple in 70 CE had important consequences for Jewish religious practice, and for Jewish life. The province of Judaea was put under a higher-ranking governor, an imperial legate of praetorian rank, and Jerusalem became the garrison of the tenth legion. Many Roman veterans were settled at Emmaus, now renamed Nicopolis. Flavia Neapolis (today Nablus) was founded as a new city in 72–3; Jaffa was rebuilt as Flavia Joppa. Much land formerly owned by Jews was redistributed. With the heavy losses of Jewish life during the revolt, the composition of the population changed considerably to the detriment of the Jews. Whereas many (mainly funerary) inscriptions found in Jerusalem from before 70 are in Hebrew, there are almost none after 70; practically all are in Greek or Latin, later also in Armenian.[35] The diaspora revolts of the years 115–17 most likely did not extend to Palestine – the movement of the general Lusius Quietus to Palestine after his suppression of the revolt in Parthia may have been a precautionary measure. But the Bar Kokhba revolt of 132–5 resulted in a catastrophe for the Jews of Judaea: Jerusalem was converted into a Graeco-Roman city, Aelia Capitolina, with pagan temples, and became forbidden territory for Jews. Jewish settlement in Judaea, now renamed Syria-Palaestina, severely declined; Galilee became the new centre of Palestinian Judaism. The situation changed for the better only after Hadrian's death and more generally

[34] Recent bibliographies for Josephus are to be found in the single volumes of *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*, ed. by S. Mason. Leiden: Brill, 2000–; seven volumes up to 2014; see especially Barclay 2007 (commentary and translation of *Against Apion*).

[35] *CIIP*, I/1–2. Only two Hebrew inscriptions are tentatively dated to our period: no. 752, a Greek/Hebrew graffito in a burial cave, dated to the third century, and no. 790, a quotation of Isa. 66:14, incised on a stone of the Western Wall which has been connected with the temple project of the emperor Julian, but might also be from a much later period. No. 1001, a Greek/Hebrew epitaph of Rabbi Samuel, *archisynagogos*, is dated third–sixth century, but its provenance is unknown.

under the Antonine emperors, when a new *modus vivendi* was found between the Roman administration and the Jews, celebrated in rabbinic stories about 'Rabbi and Antoninus'.

Seth Schwartz has argued that 'in the wake of the revolts, Jewish society disintegrated'; its larger part was attracted by 'the ideology of the Graeco-Roman city, culturally Hellenic, religiously pagan … and probably reconcilable, if only with difficulty, with retention of a variety of other mildly discredited ethnic identities'.[36] This claim is based mainly on the archaeological evidence of the major Jewish cities of Palestine in this period, where the majority of the finds are of a clearly pagan character whereas hardly any excavated synagogues date from earlier than the late third century. The conclusion may be exaggerated, but it is a fact that signs of a clearly Jewish identity are rare – the rabbinic movement and its literature are not really representative of the Palestinian Judaism of this period – whereas relics of the Graeco-Roman culture are omnipresent; theatres and public baths, decorated with statues of pagan gods and mythological scenes, were to be found in all major centres.[37]

Jews living in such centres had to speak Greek and accommodate to the dominant culture; only in small and far-off villages would it have been possible to avoid regular contacts with the Hellenistic world. A whole tractate of the Mishnah, the Tosefta and the Yerushalmi, Avodah Zarah, is dedicated to the daily problems of living as a Jew in a pagan environment. Even the Rabbis had to accept these facts, as strikingly illustrated in the story about Rabban Gamaliel in the bath of Aphrodite at Akko (*b. ʾAbod. Zar*. 3:4). In *m. Soṭ*. 9:14 we read that 'during the war of Qitus they decreed … that nobody should teach his son Greek'. This text refers to the Roman general Lusius Quietus and the diaspora uprisings of the years 115–17, and may be understood as an act of solidarity with the Greek-speaking diaspora; but it certainly had no practical effect. It is more than an irony that this text uses the expression *polmos shel Quitus*, employing the Greek word *polemos*. The Tosefta (*Soṭ*. 15:8) quotes this decree, but immediately adds an exception: 'They permitted the household of Rabban Gamaliel to teach Greek to their sons, because they are close to the government.' How much the Greek language influenced even rabbinic Hebrew, is demonstrated by the multitude of Greek loanwords in Talmud and midrash.[38] Rabbinic hermeneutics and literary forms are also deeply influenced by Hellenistic

[36] Schwartz 2001, 175.
[37] For a different position from Schwartz's, see Belayche 2001; Friedheim 2006.
[38] Outdated, but as yet not replaced except for partial fields: Krauss 1898–9. Important recent contributions: Sperber 1982 and 1984.

models.[39] The rabbis sometimes speak against the study of 'Greek wisdom'. The study of the Torah should be the exclusive pursuit of their disciples (Josh. 1:8) who should not say: 'Now that I have learned the wisdom of Israel, I shall go and study the wisdom of the nations' (*Sifre Devarim* § 34); Elisha ben Avuya is later characterized as a heretic by the fact that 'never did Greek song leave his lips' (*b. Ḥag*. 15b). The Greek translation of the Torah is approved by R. Shim'on ben Gamaliel (*m. Meg*. 1:9); Greek is the only language into which it can be adequately translated (*y. Meg*. 1:11, 71c). But other rabbis are very critical of this translation through which the Torah was usurped by the Christians.[40]

It may have been exceptional that in a synagogue of Caesarea even the central text of the liturgy, the Shemá, was recited in Greek (*y*. *Soṭ*. 7:1, 21b), but synagogue inscriptions were frequently in Greek, and not only in the coastal cities.[41] How much Greek culture and language were present even in the direct sphere of influence of the Rabbis and the Jewish patriarch, is most impressively evidenced in the Jewish catacombs of Beth She'arim where, in the third century, Judah the Prince, some members of his family and several rabbis were buried. Of the 279 inscriptions found there, 221 are in Greek, some in excellent Homeric hexameters. Several sarcophagi are decorated with mythological motifs – Aphrodite writing on a shield, Amazons in battle with the Greeks, and, perhaps most astonishingly, Leda and Zeus, who is rendered as a swan.[42] Another excellent example of the general Hellenistic context in which Judah the Prince and many rabbis lived, is the city of Sepphoris with its Roman theatre and several beautifully decorated villas, among them the 'House of Dionysos', named after the very full Dionysiac cycle depicted on the mosaic floor of its triclinium. Zeev Weiss has even suggested that the house belonged to Judah the Prince.[43] This is speculative, but it remains a fact that Sepphoris, a long-time rabbinic centre, is an outstanding example of Hellenistic culture; the synagogue (early fifth century) lies on its periphery and even this building is decorated not only with biblical scenes, but also with the zodiac, and about half of its inscriptions are in Greek. Nothing would suggest that, as stated in contemporary texts, the majority of the inhabitants were Jews.

The rapid Christianization of the country from Constantine onwards also contributed to its ongoing transformation into a province of even more profound Graeco-Roman culture. Since the year 324 Palestine had

[39] Lieberman 1962 and 1965; Fischel 1973 and 1977.
[40] Veltri 1994; see also Alexander in this volume.
[41] Roth-Gerson 1987. [42] See Levine 2012, 81–90, 119–140. [43] Talgam and Weiss 2004, 128.

become a province of central interest for the government and all Christians; an initially government-sponsored programme of church-building and an ever-growing stream of Christian pilgrims, many of whom remained in the country, changed the balance of the population and the external appearance of the landscape, with its many churches and synagogues, became visibly defined by religious affiliation. Churches and synagogues followed very similar building and decorative programmes, mostly basilicas adorned with mosaics of a clearly Hellenistic style.[44]

During Julian's short reign (361–3 CE) pagan cults were revived and Lemmatius was appointed as high priest of the province. Schools of rhetoric which existed in Caesarea, Gaza and Elusa, probably also in Ashkelon, received new importance and support which continued well into the fifth century. The most famous teacher of rhetoric of his time, Libanius, had good contacts not only with the Jewish community of Antioch, but also with Palestine and the Jewish patriarch, as documented by his correspondence. If his letter 1098 was addressed to the patriarch Gamaliel, as seems likely, it shows that the son of the patriarch came to Antioch to study with Libanius after having studied with Libanius' disciple Argeios in Caesarea or perhaps in Berytus. He left shortly after his arrival, but, as the rhetor consoles the patriarch, he had at least seen 'so many cities, as Odysseus saw'. The patriarch is expected to understand passing allusions to Homer and to be unperturbed by the mention of Greek gods. Having been elevated to the highest ranks within the administration of the empire with an honorary prefecture, the patriarch knew how to move within the non-Jewish world and Graeco-Roman culture; the same is true of many of the rabbis of the period and even more so of the common Jewish population. The Graeco-Roman culture was, after all, the general culture of their life.

2.2 *Diaspora*

The Jewish war against Rome had little effect on the diaspora. When the Greeks in Antioch asked Titus, as he passed there in 71, to expel the Jews or at least to abolish their *politeuma*, he did not grant their wishes, nor did he accept similar demands in Alexandria later in the year. Only the Jewish temple of Leontopolis was closed in 73 by Vespasian who feared it might become a centre of Jewish resistance.[45] The real threat to great parts of the diaspora came with a series of Jewish revolts that broke out during Trajan's Parthian campaign in 115, and spread to Mesopotamia, Egypt and

[44] Milson 2007. [45] Capponi 2007.

Cyrenaica – there apparently at least in part motivated by messianic expectations – and to Cyprus. Jewish attacks on the Greek population and the destruction of many Greek temples and public buildings point to another decisive factor for the revolts: the frustration of many Jews in their fight for equal civil rights and equal access to institutions of Greek culture and learning. The Jewish communities of Egypt and Cyrenaica did not survive the violence of these years; when the uprisings were finally put down in 117, hardly any Jews were left; in Cyprus they had to leave the island.[46] The long-term result of the revolts was the end of the Hellenistic-Jewish tradition in these countries. Not only had the Septuagint lost its homeland (although it continued to be used in other countries of the diaspora), the philosophical-literary tradition exemplified by Philo of Alexandria, came to an end, and endured only through its Christian reception, although Jews may have continued to read these texts for some time. There had been small Jewish communities dispersed in Egypt since the third century, but they never recovered their former importance.

In other countries, however, Jewish communities continued to flourish and grow. This was especially the case in Syria and Asia Minor, but also in Italy, especially in Rome, and in northern Africa. In Asia Minor, Jewish communities are well documented by the writings of the New Testament and early Christian literature, for the later period mainly by their archaeological remains and inscriptions. Significant for evidence of their cultural integration are three inscriptions in the theatre of Miletus which reserved seats for Jews,[47] but also an inscription of the synagogue of Acmonia, apparently donated by Iulia Severa, a priestess of the imperial cult; that the persons responsible for the renovation of the building are honoured with a golden shield, is typical of Greek *poleis*, but unknown in a Jewish context.[48] A further striking example of Jewish integration in their environment is the synagogue of Sardis that reused and adapted part of the large bath-gymnasium complex in the centre of the city. The synagogue is large and unlike any other synagogue, as is its furniture, above all a large stone table from the early Roman period, supported by two eagles carrying bundles of lightning bolts – a symbol of Zeus – and flanked by two marble lions sculpted around 400 BCE: the table was probably used for the reading of the Torah, an adaptation from a pagan past to the Jewish liturgy.[49]

[46] See Pucci Ben Zeev 2005. [47] Ameling 2004, 168–72.
[48] Ameling 2004, 348–55. [49] Ameling 2004, 209–97.

A final example of Jewish integration and acculturation in the diaspora are the Jews of Rome.[50] The community is documented by nearly 600 funerary inscriptions, mainly from the third and fourth centuries. Although Jews were buried in separate catacombs, the wall-paintings, the sarcophagi and the gold glasses used in these catacombs follow the same styles as those of pagan and Christian burials; they clearly come from the same workshops. The great majority of the inscriptions (*c*. 80 per cent) are in Greek; Latin inscriptions become more frequent in the fourth century although Latin personal names are frequent earlier. The Greek, with its grammatical and orthographic errors, is that of the lower classes, but of the same type as in non-Jewish inscriptions. Specifically Jewish symbols (mainly the menorah) become more common only in the later period; Hebrew phrases, mostly single words, remain rare. Despite clear signs of religious separation, the Jewish community was well integrated into the common Graeco-Roman culture of the city.

The increase of Hebrew in the later period, intensified in the following centuries in the Jewish community of Venosa in southern Italy, is paralleled by similar developments in other parts of the diaspora (as in Sardis). It is characteristic of a rising consciousness of one's own religious and cultural heritage and identity, and one which never threatened to bring about the full integration of the Jews into the Graeco-Roman world and culture.

2.3 *Judaism–Hellenism: retrospect*

The extent of Jewish Hellenism in the Graeco-Roman period has led to diverging evaluations. The old contrast between Hebraism and Hellenism, as expressed in Tertullian's question 'Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolymis?', seems redundant, as is the equally old contrast between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism, since Hengel convincingly demonstrated that already in the Second Temple period all Judaism was Hellenistic Judaism.[51] But the fundamental question as to the real impact of Hellenism on Judaism is still debated. Was it only superficial or a real transformation of Jewish culture? Louis H. Feldman vigorously argued against Hengel that especially in Second Temple Palestine the impact of Hellenism was rather minimal and that even the knowledge of the Greek language was very limited. 'The question, then, is not how thoroughly Jews and Judaism in the Land of

[50] See Rutgers 1995. [51] Hengel 1988 and 1996b.

Israel were Hellenized, but how strongly they resisted Hellenization.'[52] Regarding the rabbinic period, Feldman acknowledges the thousands of words of Greek origin in Talmudic writings as 'abundant testimony of Hellenization', but asserts that these:

> are almost never from the realm of ideas … there is not a single philosophical term to be found in this literature … The one rabbi who was deeply influenced by Hellenism, Elisha ben Avuyah, is roundly condemned. If the study of Greek culture was permitted, it was only under the careful guidance of the patriarch himself.[53]

This is not the place to discuss the historical accuracy of these statements. More important is Feldman's tendency to equate real Hellenization with assimilation and, for this reason, to downplay the relevance of all evidence to the contrary: 'In sum, few Jews were lost, while many were gained as proselytes through the ease with which the Jews were able to communicate to non-Jews in the lingua franca of the day, Greek.'[54]

How adequate is it to regard Jewish Hellenism through the lens of assimilation or even apostasy? Judaism could never escape contact with the surrounding cultures; it always interacted with them in different degrees, integrating aspects that helped in the adaptation of Jewish life to changing circumstances and clarifying religious ideas (as, for example, with regard to life after death), but also rejecting those elements that were considered incompatible with central aspects of Jewish life and thought. This reaction was never uniform, but always depended on the concrete circumstances of time and place and personal preferences.[55] As Erich Gruen states it:

> Reciprocity rather than rivalry takes precedence. 'Hellenism' did not inject an alien element into Jewish self-perception but provided modes of thinking and expression that could enhance that self-perception. The idea of 'Hellenization' misconceives the complicated interconnections of the Second Temple period. Judaism and Hellenism were overlapping, not clashing, cultures.[56]

[52] Feldman 1993, 44. [53] Feldman 1993, 419.

[54] Feldman 1993, 422. The statement is made in the context of Alexandria, but is also the general topic of Feldman's whole book. For a thorough discussion of Feldman's book, see Rutgers 1994–5. Rutgers sees in Feldman's general thesis a continuation of the approach of Heinrich Graetz who 'maintained that the confrontation between Jewish and Greek culture had carried the character of a "Kampf auf Leben und Tod" … In the latter's [i.e., Feldman's] view interaction means exactly what it meant to Graetz one hundred and fifty years ago, namely Jewish resistance to non-Jewish culture' (392–3). See also Feldman 2006, especially 194–6.

[55] See Levine 1998, 181–4. [56] Gruen 2010, 725.

This statement is equally valid for the rabbinic period. 'Hellenization' was part of a continuous cultural transformation, of a dynamic process, and not 'assimilation' in the pejorative meaning of the term. Where Jewish identity was strong enough, it could not be threatened by this ongoing process.

CHAPTER 3

The Jewish experience in Byzantium

Steven Bowman

This chapter in tribute to Nicholas de Lange is an overview of certain aspects of the Graeco-Jewish experience during the Byzantine period, namely an attempt to suggest a periodization on the one hand and an outline of the use of Greek language by Byzantine Jews on the other. Hence it is more a survey of these topics rather than a detailed study. Examples of recent scholarship can be found in the notes. The honoree of this Festschrift has devoted much of his scholarly career – we shall not treat here his contributions as translator of seminal Modern Hebrew authors, co-founder and editor of the *Bulletin of Judaeo-Greek Studies*, seminarch – to the question of the knowledge of Hebrew and Greek among Byzantine Jews. The following contribution to a discipline which he has made his own attempts to place this question within an historical framework that has undergone significant expansion in the past two generations through study of texts, manuscripts and Genizah fragments, each of which has illuminated different facets of an imperial experience, however hostile at times, whose history ranged throughout the Mediterranean and Black Seas.

Modern scholarship has periodized the Greek Orthodox Roman Empire centred in Constantinople from 330–1453 in three parts:

1 Late antiquity (*pace* Peter Brown), from 330 to Heraclius' revolution and the Arab Muslim conquests;
2 The middle period, from the second quarter of the seventh century until the Fourth Crusade;
3 The Palaeologan period, from 1258–1453/61 with the Crusader interlude (1204–60) as prologue.

Modern Israeli scholarship refers to the period in Christian Roman Palestina (throughout its three provinces!) from 330 to 634 as the Byzantine period.[1]

[1] Considerable work has been done in the twentieth century on the archaeology of Byzantine Palestine as well as the question of Greek there by Saul Lieberman (1962, 1965) and a reassessment of

The perplexity of nomenclature – scholarly, theological, national – aside, it should be emphasized that the citizens of the Roman Empire considered themselves Romans (Greek *Rhomaioi*) throughout the eleven centuries of the capital's existence, and to this day the Greek-speaking Jews continue to identify as Romaniotim or Romaniots.

The question for us is how to periodize the Jewish experience in this unique heir to antiquity. Did the Jewish experience follow the patterns of the empire or did their experience meander through different vicissitudes? At the outset we should note that evidence for Jewish knowledge of Greek comes primarily from two geographical areas that flank the centre of the empire: Byzantine Palestina and southern Italy. The term Byzantine Palestina, as noted, symbolizes the period that Israeli scholarship designates as the Christian Roman rule in Israel, the fourth through to the early seventh century. This was a period of intense Christianization of the conquered and occupied land through its division into three separate provinces (*prima*, with capital at Caesarea; *secunda*, with capital at Tiberius; *tertia*, the Negev), the building of monumental structures to indicate the power of the new Christian state and the flood of monasteries that brought salvation to hermits, lepers and those who sought to escape the pressures of urban life.[2] Byzantine southern Italy during the eighth to eleventh centuries produced a renaissance of Hebrew literature and a resurgence of Greek culture. The latter was challenged by Muslim conquests in Sicily and the introduction of jihad into southern Italy.[3] The expansion of Latin Christianity and the growth of the Lombard state continued to make inroads until the Norman conquests of the eleventh and twelfth centuries united the area into a Latin-dominated centre of four cultures: Latin, Greek, Arabic and Hebrew.

In both of these frontier areas Jews evidence a good knowledge of Greek. Genizah evidence for demotic Greek comes from the correspondence of Byzantine Jews who either communicated with expatriate Jews in Fustat or who brought their archives when they immigrated to Egypt. The well-known story should be noted of Jewish international merchants, both those called Rhadanites and those involved in the India trade reconstructed by S. D. Goitein and recently re-examined by Joshua Holo who, however, confines his study to Jewish influence in the Mediterranean trade before the Fourth Crusade.[4] Byzantine Jewish scholars also fled to

the politics of the *nesiuth* that represented the communities to the imperial government. On the art and archaeology, see Fine 2005, and the vast summa of Bonfil *et al.* 2012.

[2] On the strength and continuity of Jews and pagans in Palestina see inter alia Dan 1996–7.

[3] See now Metcalfe 2009. [4] Goitein 1999; Holo 2009.

the Khazar Khaganate during the ninth- and tenth-century persecutions in Byzantium and helped spread Greek and Hebrew in that state.

We may for convenience outline the received periodization of the Jewish experience from 330 to 1453 that parallels the vicissitudes of the empire, albeit from the perspective of a denigrated and occasionally persecuted minority.

1. 330 to the eve of Heraclius (Herakleios, 610–41). This period witnessed the systematic, at first *ad hoc*, anti-Jewish legislation, which entailed the reduction of their full Roman citizenship (including special privileges such as non-participation in the imperial cult) granted by Caracalla during his general expansion of this privilege in 211, to that of a *religio licita* (in the words of Jerome) subject to personal restrictions in the exercise of their ancestral religion and culture. The codes of Theodosius II (438) and Justinian (529–34) set the framework for Western European and Eastern European laws until modern times. As a result of each code Jews were restricted in their participation economically, religiously, politically, militarily, judicially and socially in the new developing Christian society.[5] This period too witnessed the competition between the Church Fathers and the Rabbis, a not quite even playing field given that 'orthodox' Christianity was emerging first as a *primus inter pares* and after 383 as the official religion of the empire.

2A. Heraclius to Romanos Lekapenos (920–44), covering the seventh to tenth centuries. The empire, attacked by an aggressive Islam that stripped the eastern and southern Mediterranean provinces as well as Spain, Sicily and Crete, and continually raided via Anatolia by the horsemen of Arabia, recoiled inward. Constantinople reacted by following an ancient policy of strengthening a diverse empire, assimilating its internal dissidents – namely those neither Orthodox nor Greek-speaking – in order to produce *una natio* with a specific 'Greek' and 'Christian' identity. The Slavs, for example, were successfully 'graecized' (*pace* Peter Charanis' neologism) in Greece and Christianized in the Balkans while the Jews suffered periodic forced baptisms.[6] The Paulicians were transferred from Anatolia to the Balkans. The Slavs then reflected a successful missionary project; the Jews suffered a recourse to the Hellenizing policies of Antiochus IV in the second century BCE; and the Paulicians experienced a resurgence of

[5] An edition of the laws regarding the Jews with commentary is Linder 1987; see Bowman 2006, with bibliography.

[6] Heraclius (seventh century), Leo the Isaurian (eighth century), Basil the Macedonian (ninth century), Romanos Lekapenos (tenth century).

the ancient Assyrian policy of deportation and subsequent dislocation. All three examples could be found in the Bible which generally served as a guide to Byzantine politicians and clergy. True, the ancient Greek histories were available, but nearly all the literate read the Bible or parts of it.[7] The Orthodox Church, for its part, argued against the forced baptism of Jews as a violation of the principle of voluntary conversion, although it did continue its polemics and propaganda.[8]

During the eighth to the eleventh centuries, for which the majority of extant sources on the Jews stem from Byzantine South Italy, a New Hebrew culture emerged that maintained close relations with the developing Jewish communities of Arab-controlled Palestine. As a renewed Jewish Patriarchate emerged in Jerusalem under the protection of Fatimid Jewry, Byzantine Jews of south Italy, who followed Palestinian Jewish traditions, contributed to the Jerusalem *yeshivoth* both economically and intellectually.[9] South Italian paytanim flourished, darshanim produced their midrashic responses to Orthodox propagandists, and historians recounted ancient and contemporary history.[10] An interesting line of research derives from the midrash *aggadat bereshit* which has been dated to the late ninth or early tenth century. It has long been accepted that the anonymous darshan was responding to Byzantine polemics in his locale somewhere in Byzantine South Italy.[11] It has been shown that he was aware of the midrash *tanhuma* corpus (also suggested to be of South Italian provenance) and in turn that the author of *Sepher Yosippon* (or one of his sources) made use of one of his arguments to refute a Christian contention that he found in the Pseudo-Hegesippus text which he was rewriting in Hebrew.[12] The point here is that the darshan knew a Greek that went beyond the lexeis found in early Palestinian midrashim. Nor should the lasting contribution of Yerahme'el ben Shlomo be forgotten, an eleventh- to twelfth-century South Italian scholar, whose collection of midrashim and translations provided modern scholarship with a vast assortment of texts.[13] The suggestion

[7] See Magdalino and Nelson 2010.

[8] For the imperial policy of forced baptism see Starr 1939. On the Church attitudes see Zylbersztein 2007. For the last stage of Byzantine history see Bowman 1980 and Bowman 1985, ch. 1.

[9] According to the panegyric in *Megillat Ahima'az* (ed. B. Klar; Jerusalem, 1974). See now the new edition of Bonfil 2009, with extensive commentary. The basic texts of the new patriarchate were edited by Mann 1920–2. See now Rustow 2008.

[10] The standard survey is Krauss 1996. See Bowman 2010; and expanded version in Garber 2011. The historians include the author of *Sepher Yosippon*, the translator of 1 Maccabees, and Ahima'az ben Paltiel's *Megillat Ahima'az* or *Sepher Yuhasin.*

[11] Teugels 2001. [12] See Bowman 2010.

[13] A unique manuscript by Eliezer ben Asher Halevi (*c.* 1325) purchased by the Bodleian Library has been published (Yassif 2001): this is a comprehensive study of this fabulous collection, excluding

years ago that *Sepher Hayashar* is a product of late eleventh-century South Italy has contributed to the growing research and, it is hoped, will continue.[14] Nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars mined Yerahme'el's collection as did medieval and renaissance scholars, both Jewish and non-Jewish. However, the text was never studied *in toto*, nor were the contents attributed to this author or his later compiler. Hence this Byzantine Jewish scholar received little notice until the fourteenth-century manuscript reached the modern critical scholars Adolph Neubauer and Moses Gaster, and the text was made available through the edition of Eli Yassif.[15] This period of eighth- to eleventh-century South Italy has long been recognized by modern scholars as a renaissance of Hebrew whose legacy extended to the Rhineland and later to eastern Europe.[16] It reflects also in its knowledge of Greek the rehellenization of this area by Byzantine ecclesiastics who had sought refuge there during the Iconoclastic Controversy when the Iconophiles/Iconodules founded a new and fertile diaspora.[17] At the same time cross-cultural influences bound these Jews to the western Islamic world centred in Sicily and the new Caliphate in Islamic Spain.[18]

Nor should the capital Constantinople be ignored. Despite the paucity of sources available for the history of the Jews in Greek sources – the majority collected by Joshua Starr – there are other literary sources that are slowly being identified.[19] *Hazzon Daniel* (The Vision of Daniel), for example, was shown to be a tenth-century text by Bonfil.[20] His analysis suggests that the author spent some profitable time in the imperial library in Constantinople where he examined various Greek versions of Daniel and relevant apocalypses to produce a not so veiled treatise on Byzantine vicissitudes in southern Italy. This reconstruction raises another question, namely the survival of Jewish messianists or Jewish Christians who had produced a body of literature, considered apocryphal by the Orthodox Church, on early Christianity. This literature preserved the teaching and leadership of Jacob (aka James) the brother of Jesus (mentioned

the entire *Sepher Yosippon* (for which see Flusser 1981). For bibliography through to 1970 see Haim Schwarzbaum's Prolegomenon to Gaster 1971.

[14] My thanks to Meir Bar Ilan for an advanced reading of his article on *Sepher Hayashar*.

[15] See below for Yerahme'el's intriguing notice of Greek translators and editors of the Bible.

[16] Noted by Neubauer 1887. See the popularized scholarly summaries in Roth 1966. See Baron 1952, vols. III–VIII *passim*.

[17] See the classic study by Charanis 1946–7; and a different approach by Dillon 2004 and Csaxi 2004.

[18] See Flusser's introduction to *The Josippon* (1980, vol. II); and Metcalfe 2009.

[19] Starr 1939. A better view of the sources for Jews in Byzantium will be gleaned from Nicholas de Lange's project, 'Mapping the Jewish Communities of Byzantine Empire' (www.mjcb.eu/).

[20] Bonfil 1979; for additional bibliography see Bowman 1986.

by Josephus *Ant.* 99–100) whose letter is extant in the traditional New Testament. The corpus of Pseudo-Clementine literature translated from Greek into Latin by Rufinus of Aquileia in the late fourth century claims (*Rec.* 1.43.2) that the only difference between the followers of 'James' and the Jews was the belief in Jesus as the messiah (*ho christos*). Also the Acts of Thaddeus which apparently stemmed from Edessa but was available in Greek by the sixth or seventh century and copied in the thirteenth century belongs to this literature.[21] Such literature in Syriac, Greek and Latin reminds us that Jewish polemics such as the *Toldoth Yeshu*, first mentioned by Agobard of Lyons in the Carolingian period, had ample competitors throughout the medieval period in Greek and Latin manuscripts, languages that Jews could and did read, and perhaps may well help to explain certain themes in medieval Jewish polemics.[22] A related question is that of the language of the sources read by Jews who restored the lost apocalyptic literature of the Second Temple period. Flusser and Himmelfarb[23] argue that the versions of Hebrew Second Temple literature were read in Greek and translated into Hebrew. Steven Ballaban has countered this argument with an analysis of the literary career of Moses HaDarshan and argued, successfully I believe, that the literature of the Second Temple was preserved in Syriac and available to the Christian and Jewish scholars in Nisibis. From there it was brought much later to Europe within the intellectual baggage of Moses HaDarshan, who taught it in his Narbonne yeshivah. While Flusser argued elsewhere that the author of *Sepher Yosippon* derived his apocryphal knowledge from the Latin versions available in his environment, clearly there were Hebrew (or other language) versions of the literature available in the area whether or not the author made use of them.[24]

A related polemic is that of Nestor the Priest. The modern editors show it to be a Hebrew adaptation of the *Qiṣṣat Mujādalat al-Usquf*, an anonymous Judaeo-Arabic polemic against Christianity (indeed the earliest Arabic Jewish anti-Christian text extant) written perhaps in Egypt in the mid-ninth century.[25] The editors suggest that the translation was produced in Andalusian Spain whence it moved eastward to a Greek-speaking milieu where numerous Greek glosses were added, most likely in Crete, the place

[21] See *ANF* VIII: 357 and 558–9. Research into the Pseudo-Clementine is reviewed, as far as 1982, in Jones 2012.

[22] See now Schäfer *et al.* 2011, and my review in *H-Judaic* (Bowman 2012a).

[23] Himmelfarb 1984; Himmelfarb 1994.

[24] Ballaban 1994.

[25] See the critique of Eisenstein's text of *Nestor the Priest* (Eisenstein 1928, 310–15) in the edition of Lasker and Stroumsa 1996, 95 (vol. II presents the Judaeo-Arabic and Hebrew versions of the texts and introductions). See in general William Horbury's revised and expanded edition of Krauss (1996).

where one of the Greek texts was copied in 1493. Hence Nestor's polemic in the Balkans belongs to the latter stages of the Byzantine Romaniot experience.[26]

2B. Beginning with the uncoiling of this taut spring into which the empire had retracted as defence against the Muslim advances, Byzantine armies in the second half of the tenth century exploded through Anatolia in a series of crusades that reunited eastern provinces long lost to the empire. Jewish immigration from these areas, including the new movement of Karaism, was drawn to the potential opportunities of the empire and especially its capital on the Bosphoros (Gr. for 'oxford'). Jews flourished in the succeeding period and recolonized many areas of mainland Greece and Anatolia as well as the islands.[27]

3A. The Crusader capture of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade and the subsequent partition of the empire under Latin Catholic rulers is a shameful interlude even to this day among the Greeks. The latter already had a hostile attitude toward the Latins, stemming from long-standing theological misunderstandings based on the inadequacy of Latin to render the complexities and subtleties of Greek interpretations of Scripture. These culminated in the mutual excommunications of the Latin legate and the Orthodox Patriarch in 1054. Jews became subjects of the numerous political entities that followed the break-up of a unified Orthodox empire in 1204 and some followed the Lascarids to Nicaea where a rump state appeared and expanded over the next two generations under John Vatazes (1222–54). There too the Jews experienced the contempt of the emperor in his last years and perhaps even persecution.[28]

3B. Insofar as the Jewish experience is concerned, the restoration of Greek rule under Michael Palaeologos is better seen as a prolegomenon to the more hospitable Ottoman period which, throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, inexorably reunited the Balkans under one empire with its capital in Constantinople – now called in Turkish Istanbul from the Greek *eis tin Polin*. Despite continued legal restrictions based on the

[26] E.g., Abraham Roman's response to the polemic of Patriarch Cyril Lukaris (1627); see Bowman 1985, 298 for bibliography.

[27] See Ankori 1959, ch. 3 on the Byzantine crusades and his extended commentary on Benjamin of Tudela's travels through Byzantium (*passim*). See comments by Jacoby 2002. On the Karaites and their knowledge of Greek, see Astren 2004, and below.

[28] See Bowman 1985, document 24, 229 and discussion, 15 ff. See now Jacoby on the silk workers of Nicaea (2001, 18–19). For a recent survey of the post-Fourth Crusade period see Bowman 2012b.

laws derived from the Justinian code, Jews flourished under the protection of the government that used both Jews and Armenians to counter the increasing economic influence (and attraction of locals to economic opportunity) of the Venetians and Genoese. Jewish immigration into Greece after their expulsions from western and central Europe was paralleled by a small migration of Sephardi merchants and scholars from the Iberian peninsula. Byzantine intellectuals and ecclesiastics continued to be less than friendly to domestic and foreign Jews.[29]

The last stage of the Palaeologan period witnessed increasing fragmentation under the relentless expansion of the new Ottoman ghazi emirate, soon to be a sultanate, which in the mid-fifteenth century succeeded in re-establishing an empire that by the sixteenth controlled the Balkans, Anatolia, Syria-Palestina, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Arabia and an expansion westwards across the Maghreb. This powerful sultanate, whose tenth ruler – Suleiman al Qanuni (1520–1566) – arrogated to himself the title of caliph, ushered in a new era for the Romaniot Jews and their Iberian coreligionists recently exiled from their millennial homeland (1492). It is an historical curiosity that Salonika became a Sephardi Jewish stronghold with Judaeo-Spanish as its mother tongue, while Constantinople was resettled by the forced deportation of Greeks, Armenians, and Jews by Mehmet II shortly after his conquest of the city in 1453. Thus Constantinople, popularly called Istanbul, became and remained the centre of Greek-speaking Rabbanite and Karaite Jews throughout the Ottoman period. Areas conquered by the Ottomans after 1455 retained their Greek-speaking Romaniot communities, such as Epirus, the Peloponnesus and Crete.[30]

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We may suggest another framework for periodization which fits better the internal Jewish story in Byzantium, albeit one also affected by the attitudes of the dominant Greek Orthodox establishment. It consists of two segments divided by the resurgence of the empire in the second half of the tenth century. The first period extends from the fourth to the mid-tenth century and is characterized by increasing degradation and persecution of the Jews resulting in four periods of persecutions, each in succeeding centuries during periods of national emergency, as noted above. The deterioration of the ancient Roman Republic's tolerance for the Jews was a reflection of the pressures on the state and the internal

[29] See Bowman and Cutler 1991, 122–3.

[30] Rozen 2002, with an extended critique of Joseph Hacker's thesis of Romaniot organization after the conquest (inter alia, Hacker 1982).

heresies that militated against the principle of one emperor, one religion, one language.[31] The succeeding Christian period may also be characterized by the empire's need for the return of the messiah. The Jews were characterized as deicides (*theoktonoi*), and yet they held the key to his return by their refusal to convert. The Church argued on the basis of the Septuagint that Jesus was in fact the expected messiah, while the emperors of the Middle Byzantine period showed little patience with the slow results of ecclesiastical propaganda and resorted to forced baptism to hasten his return.

The second period in this alternative schema dates from the last third of the tenth century to the middle of the fifteenth. Here we see an increase in Jewish population through the twelfth century as a result of the immigrations from the eastern borderlands. The resulting economic attractions increased tolerance under the later Paleologue emperors for the Jewish communities as the state was in need of their taxes that became more important as the empire lost control of its revenues to the landed nobility, the Church properties, the Italian city states, and the demands of the bureaucracy. All these rival forces depleted a weakening treasury such that the naval backbone of defence suffered accordingly.

This alternative schema adjusts the rhythm of the Jewish experience in Byzantium to the realities of the new economic and ecclesiastical research that has been appearing in the past generation.[32] Future analyses may find it more useful to explore the internal experiences of the minorities in the multi-ethnic empire and their relations with the establishment and thus introduce a more nuanced approach to our understanding of this complex and sophisticated relic of the ancient world.

We may now return to the question of Greek language, which is the other face of our inquiry. The Jews who lived under the auspices of the Christian Roman Empire, more popularly known as Byzantine, were Greek-speaking since the Hellenistic period, a total of some 1,750 years. The extensive inscription from Aphrodisias in Anatolian Caria is one indication among many of the continuing use of Greek by Jews.[33] The language among these communities during the Ottoman period remained a Judaeo-Greek dialect that de Lange has convincingly suggested to be a demotic Greek preserved as a Bible translation in the 1547 Constantinople tri-lingual edition, reflecting a tradition that goes back to

[31] See now Goodman 2007.
[32] See recent essays of Jacoby 2008b; Abulafia 2008, and above note 4.
[33] Reynolds and Tannenbaum 1987, who date this inscription to the late second or third century but add later examples in their extensive commentary to the text.

the Judaeo-Greek translations of the Bible of the third and fourth centuries, if not earlier.[34]

It may be appropriate here to introduce a unique medieval summary of the various translations and editions of the Bible into Greek and Latin. It was written by Yerahme'el ben Shmuel of southern Italy who is dated to the second half of the eleventh century and is preserved in the *Seder Olam*, published by A. Neubauer:[35]

> In the days of Talmai Philadelphus[36] king of Egypt were 70 elders who translated for him 24 books. And Elazar who was killed in the days of Antiochus the Wicked was one of them[37] and this event was 341 years before birth of the crucified one.[38] And 124 years after the crucifixion in the days of Hadrian was Aqilas, he is Onkelos, and he translated from Hebrew to Aramaic. Others say from Hebrew to Greek. He was the first of the translators from Hebrew [MS has Hebrews] to Greek. And 53 years after Aqilas in the reign of Commodus the king (180–192) was Todos [Theodotion], he is Theodosio and he translated: and 30 years after Todos in the days of Severus father of Antoninus[39] was Somkos, he is Symmachus and he translated. And Severus was called 'broken king' [*shvur malka*].[40] And eight years later anthologized books [*sepharim meluqatim*] were found in Jerusalem which they knew not who collected them. And 18 years later in the days of Alexander the king was Origen[41] and he translated and made two signs in place of the *psaq*. One was called *astriqan* which is like a brightening star, most likely it is so.[42] Second was called *obilo*[43] which is like a bow and it is the *psaq* (stop). And all of them translated from Hebrew to Greek. Others translated from Hebrew to Latin but incorrectly. Finally in the days of Theodosio king of Rome [Theodosius I (379–95) or II (401–50)] arose a man named Ieronymus [Jerome *c.* 345–420], a man of understanding and wise and he studied the Torah of our Lord and translated on … [one word erased by a censor] from Hebrew to Latin, and the sages of all nations accepted all his books for themselves.

[34] De Lange 2010. [35] Neubauer 1887, I: 174–5.

[36] Ptolemy II Philadelphus (308–246 BCE).

[37] These data are from *Sepher Yosippon* (see Flusser's edition [1981, 64–6] for the best annotated edition) which was incorporated in Yerahme'el's anthology of texts. See Gaster 1971, 259–60 (with caution) and Hebrew in Yassif 2001, 286–7.

[38] Compare the various chronicles published by Neubauer, 1887, I: *ad locum*.

[39] Marcus Aurelius Alexander Severus (222–35 CE), more accurately designated the 'son of the deified Antoninus'.

[40] A Talmudic phrase referring to a king either friendly to Israel or hostile to Israel; in this instance the former.

[41] See de Lange 1976. [42] Modern asterisk, see following note.

[43] Greek ὀβελός, see Sophocles 1900, s.v., citing Origen (PG 11, I 57A) for a critical mark denoting *delete*; see LSJ s.v.

It is clear from the text that the writer knew Greek; noteworthy are the 'strange passages' that follow the text of *Yosippon*.[44] We also read in the *Seder Olam* published by Neubauer: 'And I Yerahme'el found in *Yosippon* that Samuel wrote the Book of Judges.'[45]

It should be emphasized that Byzantine Hebrew was not influenced by Arabic as was the case with the Hebrew of the far-flung Islamic Caliphate; rather it reflected the linguistic changes and grammatical innovations that had characterized the Hebrew of Palestine during the Mishnaic and later periods. A caveat needs to be noted here regarding the Greek utilized by the first generations of Karaite scholars. Tobias ben Moses studied in the Arabophone academies in Jerusalem and took his notes in Hebrew, Greek and Arabic. He utilized these notebooks upon his return to Constantinople to develop a library for his community.[46] This melange of languages for the purposes of commentary and teaching lasted until the late thirteenth to fourteenth centuries when the careers of the two Aarons (of Constantinople and of Nikomedia) restored a 'rabbinic-like' style (for commentary) and a clear Hebrew style (for philosophical and legal texts).[47]

We know from three sources that the Jews of this empire were primarily Greek speaking. And why not? Jews have always mastered the language of the host societies of their far-flung diasporas, even as they later wrote them in their own Hebrew alphabet (at least from the eighth century). Alexandria was the centre of Greek language and culture during the Hellenistic period. The extensive literature the Jews produced there, conveniently preserved by the various Christian communities of the East for whom it served as a link with the Hebrew biblical tradition, is a witness to this Hellenization. Both Philo and Josephus would have enormous influence on the scholars and monks of the Byzantine period. Nor should Saul/Paul of Tarsus be ignored, whose rhetorical skills and control of Greek, evidenced in the letters attributed to him and preserved in the New Testament, successfully turned a Jewish *mashiah* into a Greek *christos*.

The first evidence, aside from the numerous extant inscriptions (e.g., Aphrodisias), illustrating their Graecophone culture is well known and is chronicled in Justinian's *Novella* 146 (553 CE). There he records that Jews,

[44] Neubauer, 1887, I: 190–1.The first is the dispersion of the captives from Jerusalem in southern Italy and Carthage and the settlement of Josephus in Rome with his own synagogue. The second is a list of Josephus's writings and his contact with prominent Christian figures.

[45] Neubauer 1895.

[46] See Ankori 1959, s.v., for extended discussion.

[47] That is the adoption of rabbinic methods of exegesis as Ankori 1959 has shown.

presumably citizens of the empire if not denizens of the capital, came to him (in his capacity as Pontifex Maximus [chief priest of the empire]) to complain of (immigrant) Jews who demanded that the Bible be read in Hebrew in the synagogue. These new Jews, whose titles reflect a Palestinian origin, attest to the emigration of scholars following Theodosius II's recognition of the vacancy of the Patriarchal leadership of the Jews. This law effectively ended the office of the Nasi of the Palestinian academy who had been the spokesman to the emperor for the Jewish community and the arbiter for imperial and diasporic Judaism. These new Jews then were Hebrew literate as opposed to the Greek-speaking laity of the empire. Justinian recognized the Jews' right to read the Torah in any language – preferably the Christianized Septuagint as he suggested but could not command – and then proceeded to define a Judaism that reflected a tradition more acceptable to him and, in all likelihood, to the acculturated Jews who had asked for his intervention. Jews now had to recognize the resurrection of the dead, had to believe in angels, and were forbidden to teach the *deuterosis*, which probably refers to the entire oral tradition rather than just to the Mishnah, as some scholars suggest. Justinian's abolition of a Jewish-defined Judaism with its commentaries and expansive literature crippled Byzantine Jewry, a situation exacerbated by the punishments inflicted upon those Jewish communities in North Africa and Naples who had supported the Vandal and Gothic attacks on imperial forces. Moreover, Justinian anticipated the forthcoming persecutions of the next period by forcibly baptizing select communities and expelling the Jews on the island of Jotabah which was an autonomous Jewish enclave at the head of the Red Sea. For three generations imperial Jewry languished under these restrictions and barely survived until rescued by the Islamic conquests. In the constricting empire they suffered periodic (and perhaps ephemeral) persecutions for the next four centuries.

The second piece of evidence is the bilingual fragment (Hebrew–Greek) of a Mishnaic glossary.[48] This long-known list of Hebrew words and their Greek translation has been supplemented considerably by de Lange's edition of Judaeo-Greek biblical commentaries preserved in the Genizah of Cairo, which show that Jews studied their Torah in Greek and used the Hebrew alphabet to communicate its contents.[49] The phenomenon of using a traditional ethnic or majority alphabet to represent another language is as old as cuneiform. Examples include Persian which is written in Arabic characters and some Balkan languages written in Greek characters.

[48] Starr 1935. [49] De Lange 1996a.

Occasionally new alphabets were generated by the majority culture, as in the case of the brothers Cyril and Methodius who used mainly Greek but also several Hebrew letters to represent Slavic sounds in their translations of a religious library during their missionary travels. Russian is a similar phenomenon. We shall return to the Hebrew tradition later.

The third type of evidence is the presence of Greek lexeis in the Hebrew commentaries and philosophical texts stemming from Byzantium. In particular we should note the graecisms in the likely South Italian midrash *aggadat bereshit*, which responds to Byzantine polemics of the Middle Byzantine period with its own apologetic/polemical teaching.[50] Even more conclusive is the presence of Judaeo-Greek piyyutim in the synagogue services of the Romaniotim, published by Leon Weinberger.[51] Southern Italy, home to paytanim, physicians and historians has left us fragments of the poetry of Menahem Hakatan, son of R. Mordecai Corizzi (ultimately from Koritsa in Albania) from the community of Odrunt (Otranto), replete with Greek lexeis. The extant penitential prayers of Elijah ben Shemaiah interpolate older Greek lexeis. Physicians of renown included Asaf haRofe (perhaps a pseudonym) and Shabbetai Donnolo, both of whom have left seminal medical works indicating a familiarity with Greek medical texts and pharmacopeia.[52] Indeed the medical school at Salerno is reputed to have among its founders a Jew, a Muslim, a Greek and a Latin, that is one representative from each of the four cultures that flourished in southern Italy. The standard Jewish candidate is usually identified as Shabbetai Donnolo. The recent study of Piergabriele Mancuso argues strongly for Donnolo's settlement in Rossano where he practised medicine and was on good terms with Saint Nilus.[53] His command of both literary and spoken

[50] See now Bowman 2010. Hostens (1986) published a contemporary anonymous Greek *Dissertatio Contra Iudaeos* (likely also from Southern Italy that the editor dates to 907/908).

[51] Weinberger 1998.

[52] The classic study is Lieber 1984, in an issue of *DOP* summarizing a symposium on Byzantine medicine. A précis of her article appears in Pop 2008. See also Baader 1984. The author is apparently unaware of Shabbtai Donnolo's *Sepher Hamirqahot*, a tenth-century pharmacopeia which used Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica* either directly or, as Lieber suggests, drawing the botanical information from Asaf's *Book of Medicines* (in Hebrew). The earlier study of Sharf (1976) is a useful introduction to this polymath. Donnolo attests to studying Latin, Greek and Arabic. See now the discussion of Donnolo's *Sefer Hakhmoni* (Mancuso 2010). A Jewish physician at the Ottoman court added Hebrew terms to the copy of Dioscorides (with Arabic and Turkish terms) that he used (and likely owned) in Constantinople in the fifteenth or sixteenth century (see *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, I: *s.v.*).

[53] Mancuso 2010, 16 ff. Donnolo's reputation may have outlived him in local lore. I recall being pleasantly surprised years ago when I read Carlo Levi's *Christ Stopped at Eboli* that in an isolated southern hill town he received the sobriquet *rofé* from the locals whom he serviced with first aid and other advice.

Greek, as well as Latin and Hebrew, lacked only evidence of Arabic to make him a true representative of the multicultural area in which he functioned. Ahima'az ben Paltiel of Capua in his *Sepher Yuhasin* (colophon dated 1054) populates this area of Apulia with many Jewish settlements, the most famous of which was his family's ancestral hometown of Oria, midway between Taranto and the Adriatic with its scholarly centre at Bari. One might ask Ahima'az – if the answer is not so obvious – in which language Rabbi Hannanel disputed with the bishop of Oria, or Rabbi Shephatia discoursed with Basil in Constantinople, or Shabbatai Donnolo intercoursed with Nilus? One can assume a firm knowledge of Greek and Hebrew in Apulia from at least the eighth century until the expulsion of the Jews from southern Italy at the end of the thirteenth century. Nor were Arabic and Latin unknown.

Our one piece of evidence of an historian from southern Italy is the anonymous author/editor of *Sepher Yosippon*, who was fluent in Hebrew and in Latin, though there is no evidence of his having any Greek or Arabic. The translation into Hebrew of 1 Maccabees (late ninth or tenth century) also seems to be based on the Latin tradition. Ahima'az ben Paltiel, author of S*epher Yuhasin*, also called by modern scholars *Megillat Ahima'az*, and scion of the paytanim of Oria, eschews use of Greek in his Maqāma-style (an Arabic-style poetic genre) epic of his ancestors from his relocated home in Capua, although such words as *hegemon* were likely in common usage. Nor should one dismiss the collection of midrashim known as *The Chronicles of Yerahme'el*, which include translations from older Latin texts, such as Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*, originally a first-century rewritten biblical history that was rendered into Greek and then Latin before returning to Hebrew in southern Italy.[54] The eleventh-century translation made in Italy of Pseudo Kallisthenes' *Praxis Alexandrou*, which was later interpolated into *Sepher Yosippon*, was, however, apparently made from a very early Greek manuscript.[55] It is so literal that one can almost restore the original Greek, as Flusser argued in his dissertation at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. My own suspicions are that such Hebrew translations were occasionally done as exercises in learning the language and were likely the work of younger students.[56] By the twelfth century Karaite commentaries appear peppered with Greek terms, in particular the heritage of the eleventh-century Tobias ben Moses, who

[54] Gaster 1971, with an extensive annotated bibliographic essay by its modern editor.
[55] See Flusser 1981, 461–91, and commentary in vol. II (1980), 236–48.
[56] See my review of Van Bekkum 1994 (Bowman 1997).

created a library for his Byzantine co-religionists based on his studies in Jerusalem which he took down in Hebrew, Arabic and Greek. Likewise, the twelfth-century Karaite Jacob ben Reuben, author of the unpublished commentary called *Sepher haOsher*, shows a good working knowledge of Greek.[57] The eleventh-century Rabbanite commentator Tobias ben Eliezer used Greek equivalents for difficult Hebrew words in his *Lekah Tov*, much as his contemporary Rashi did in Old French for his contemporaries and students. This appearance of Greek lexeis among Karaite scholars is a good indication of the acculturation of the recently established Karaite communities following their late tenth-century migrations to Byzantium. Their settlement alongside existing Romaniot communities is a typical *Landsmannschaft* experience that was fully explored by Zvi Ankori.[58]

By the fourteenth century we are on more sound ground with respect to an expansion of the previous phenomena. Here we find professional translators and teachers who could capitalize on their knowledge of Greek and market this skill. In recent times a wide-ranging study of the economic and intellectual facets of Romaniot culture throughout the Aegean centres can be found in the dissertation of Philippe Gardette.[59] In it he explores the findings of David Jacoby regarding Romaniot merchants among the Venetians and the Genoese. Of perhaps more interest to our theme is his comparison of Romaniot intellectual interests and possible contacts with their contemporary Christian Greeks. More specifically we can cite the polymath Shemarya ha-Ikriti and his grandson Shemarya ben Ishmael; the latter, however, is known only as a scribe of his grandfather's texts. Shemarya ha-Ikriti, in addition to writing a more simplified Talmud for his son and several philosophical treatises, is better known as a translator of Greek philosophical texts into Latin at the court of Robert II of Sicily, whose reputation preceded him throughout the northern Mediterranean Jewish centres. Shemarya's prize student was Judah ibn Moskoni, the collator of what became the most popular version of *Sepher Yosippon.* Judah introduces us to a new phenomenon, which may have had a longer pedigree. He signs his name as *Yehudah known as Leon son of Mosheh known as Moskoni*. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars mistakenly refer to him as Judah Moskoni, as if the second part were a family name, sometimes even designating an Italian provenance for the family! Rather, the dual name indicates that both he and his father had two names, one for

[57] On these scholars and their works, see Ankori 1959; Astren 2004.

[58] Ankori 1959.

[59] Gardette 2003; see abstract in *BJGS* 33 (Winter 2003–4), 5–6.

the street and one for the synagogue, a clear indication of the extent of acculturation among Balkan Jews. The names cited by Benjamin of Tudela in his *Itinerary* through twelfth-century Byzantium show a mixture of Hebrew, Greek and Italian.

In the late fourteenth century an abridgement of Aristotle's *Logic* was copied for a Sephardi, R. Yehudah b. R. Ya'akov ha-Sephardi known as ibn 'Attar.[60] This suggests that Romaniot Jewish scholars were able to contribute their heritage to the wealthier Sephardi immigrants or resident merchants of the Balkans already in the fourteenth century. Another well-known Jewish translator was Rav Shlomo ben Eliahu Sharbit haZahav (traditionally dated *c.* 1420–*c.* 1501/2).[61] In addition to his books on astronomy and grammar, commentaries on Ibn Ezra and extant piyyutim, he is identified as the translator of Ptolemy's treatise on the astrolabe.[62] It is a curiosity worth exploration that Sharbit haZahav translates the Greek name of the well-known Byzantine scholar George Chrysokokkis whose career has interesting parallels to our Romaniot scholar.[63] Perhaps the most famous of the Jewish philosophers who taught in Greek was Elissaeos/Elisha whom we now know to have been a physician at the Ottoman court in Edirne.[64] There he taught George Gemistos Plethon who was instrumental in the revival of Plato when he was in Florence for the Church Council in 1437.[65] The latest and most famous of the Romaniot scholars was Mordekhai Khomatiano (Hebrew Komtino), who identifies himself as '*Ha-Yevani*, the Greek of Constantinople'.[66] A teacher of Rabbanite students, he opened his classes to Karaites. He taught most likely in Greek, the language of his local students, and in his commentary, dated 1460, attempted to refute the Christian attempts at reading the Trinity into the Septuagint as well as showing a familiarity with other Greek sources. He also glosses in his commentary Arabic terms of Ibn Ezra in Greek.[67]

By way of summary and epilogue, the Greek–Jewish population maintained its love of Greek language epitomized in the Talmud in the epigram to the *Bulletin of Judeo-Greek Studies*, 'the beauty of Yaphet in the

[60] See Bowman 1985, doc. 91, 286–7.

[61] On his dates and the following comments see Bowman 1985, 147. Some scholars have placed him in the fourteenth century.

[62] On the astrolabe, see s.v. in *Encyclopedia Judaica* which deals only with the Spanish story; for Byzantine astrolabes whose study was quite popular in the Palaeologue period, see s.v. in the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, I, 213–14. Neither mentions our Romaniot scholar. See his *Mahalakh haKokhavim* (Vat. Ms. 393).

[63] Bonfil *et al.* 2012, 147 n.

[64] Wust 1989.

[65] Examples with bibliography are drawn from Bowman 1985 *passim*.

[66] Attias 1991. See my review in *BS/EB* 1–2 (1996–7), 222–4.

[67] Attias 1991, 32–3 and 33–5 for his commentary on Greek opinions.

tents of Shem', and halakhically recognized in the permission to begin the reading of the biblical portions in Hebrew but to continue in Greek.[68] It is fitting, therefore, to refer to the honoree's most recent discussion of the long tradition of Jewish study of the Bible in Greek during the Byzantine period, a little known but rich tradition partially preserved in the Genizah materials which he had earlier published.[69] The bastion of Judaeo-Greek and its piyyut tradition remained in Ioannina and its diaspora until the twentieth-century destruction of that community. Other centres include Crete, Chalkis and the Peloponnese settlements, especially in the area of the modern Greek state until World War I. It is sufficient to recall the sixteenth-century Romaniot translation of the Bible which serviced the now *sürgün* (forcibly resettled) Greek-speaking Jews in Istanbul and the earlier twelfth-century Greek version of the Book of Jonah.[70] Rabbinic responsa of the Ottoman period also record evidence given before the rabbinic courts in demotic Greek. Since the near-total destruction of Greek Jewry during World War II, Greek Jewry is nearly all Graecophone and literate with a growing bibliography that belies its small numbers.[71]

[68] See Bowman 1985, 166 n. 125 citing custom in Crete discussed by Elijah Kapsali.

[69] De Lange 2010; and more recently de Lange 2012.

[70] Hesseling, 1897 and Hesseling 1901.

[71] See the bibliographical notices in *Xronika*, indexed in the *Bulletin of Judaeo-Greek Studies* and Bowman 1979b. A sampling of Asher Moissis's essays has been recently published by his son Raphael and is available on the website of KIS of the Athens Jewish community (www.kis.gr).

CHAPTER 4

Jews and Jewish communities in the Balkans and the Aegean until the twelfth century

Alexander Panayotov

The aim of my chapter is to review the evidence on Jews and Jewish communities in the Balkans,[1] the Aegean and Cyprus until the end of the twelfth century. The proposed end-date of my survey takes into account the change in the demography and social status of the Jewish population following the Venetian, and later Genoese, expansion in these areas since the twelfth century. The areas of the former Roman and Byzantine provinces of Syria and Palaestina will not be included as they need a separate treatment in view of their loss to the Arabs in 650. The evidence on Jews and Jewish communities in Asia Minor is excluded from this survey owing to limitations of space. The survey will include the following entries: (1) geographical area; (2) place; (3) bibliography; (4) type of evidence – archaeological, epigraphical, literary (including letters, Church and state documents); Jewish names mentioned in the source; (5) occupation. The bibliography will include reference to major corpora, new editions of sources and important monographs and articles. The survey will include only information from sources which can be dated and localized.

The Jewish communities in the Balkans, the Aegean archipelago and Cyprus are well documented for the period until the seventh century. This includes evidence from literary sources, a large number of inscriptions, some excavated synagogues and various archaeological data. Most of this information has been recently re-edited and new material published in the volumes on Eastern Europe, Asia Minor and Cyprus of *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis*. However, from the eighth century until the eleventh century the limited information has not been studied in detail. More than twenty years ago Nicholas de Lange observed that the study of Jews in Byzantium was impeded by a number of difficulties such as lack of sources and interest among Jewish and Byzantine scholars.[2] Indeed, scholars still rely on the in

[1] Area defined by the Danube–Sava–Kupa line.
[2] De Lange 1992a, 19–22.

many ways dated works of Joshua Starr from 1939 and 1949, Zvi Ankori from 1959, Andrew Sharf from 1971 and Steven Bowman from 1985 when studying Jews in Byzantium.[3] The aim of my contribution is to present in condensed and accessible form the available evidence on Jews and Jewish communities in the areas already mentioned, facilitating further interest and research in this area. The information gathered in this survey is important for understanding the communal structure of the Jewish communities and their involvement in the life of the Roman and Byzantine Empires.

Survey of Jews and Jewish communities

1 Dalmatia

Location: Mogorjelo (near Čapljina, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Doclea (Podgorica, Montenegro), Peratovci (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Senia (Senj, Croatia), Salona (Split, Croatia), Asseria (Benkovac, Croatia).

Bibliography: *IJudO* I, 20–9, nos. Dal1–3.

Archaeological data: Archaeological evidence includes a Jewish tomb discovered in the eastern necropolis of ancient Doclea (dated to the fourth century), clay lamps with the image of a menorah from Mogorjelo (near Narona), Salona, Asseria (Benkovac), fragment of a sarcophagus with the image of a menorah and glass medallion with images of menorah, lulav and shofar from Salona. There are also images of menorahs scratched on the walls of Diocletian's palace.

Inscriptions: Jewish epitaphs have been discovered in Peratovci (Dal1, second–third CE), Senia (Dal2, third–fourth century) and Salona (Dal3, fourth century). The language of the inscriptions is Latin, but in Senia the Latin is written in Greek characters.

Jewish names: second–fourth century CE: Joses (Peratovci), Aurelius Dionysius from Tiberias (Senia).

2 Moesia

Location: Oescus (Gigen, Bulgaria), Dorticum (Vrav, Bulgaria).

Bibliography: *IJudO* I, 30–6, nos. Moes1–2; Panayotov 2004, 52–6.

[3] In recent years, the research projects initiated by Nicholas de Lange, including 'The Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism' (online: www.gbbj.com) and 'Mapping the Jewish Communities of the Byzantine Empire' (online: www.byzantinejewry.net), have advanced the study of Jews in Byzantium.

Inscriptions: The only Jewish epitaph from Moesia was discovered in Oescus and could be dated to the fourth century (Moes1). The language of the inscription is Latin. Another fragmentary inscription in Greek from Oescus (fourth–sixth century) bears the image of a menorah (Moes2).

Literary sources: Procopius, *De Aed.* IV.6.21, refers in the sixth century to a watchtower called Ἰουδαῖος among the Danube fortifications near the fort of Dorticum.

Jewish names: Joses (Oescus).

Occupation: *archisynagogos.*

3 Thrace

Location: Philippopolis (Plovdiv, Bulgaria), Stanimaka (Assenovgrad, Bulgaria), Drama (Greece), Christopolis (Kavala, Greece), Byzie (Vize, Turkey), Heraclea Perinthos (Marmara Ereğlisi, Turkey), Rodosto (Tekirdağ, Turkey), Gallipoli (Gelibolu, Turkey), Koila (Kales near Eceabat, Turkey).

Bibliography: Adler 1907, II, 14; Starr 1939, 231, no. 182; Bowman 1985, 335; Thomas and Constantinides-Hero 2001, II, 770, 840; *IJudO* I, 38–55, nos. Thr1–5; *IJudO* II, 64–8, nos. 12–13; Williams 2007, 319, n. 68.

Archaeological data: The remains of a synagogue were discovered in 1981 in Plovdiv (ancient Philippopolis). The main hall is covered with two mosaic floors – one is decorated with a menorah and a bunch of the 'four species' (lulav, ethrog, willow and myrtle). The remains from the second mosaic floor, which was laid over the first at a later date, suggest that it was decorated predominantly by geometric figures. The building was probably built in the early fourth century, renovated in the fifth century and destroyed in the sixth (*IJudO* I; Williams 2007).

Inscriptions: Three dedicatory inscriptions in Greek (Thr1–2, fourth–sixth century; Williams 2007) are preserved in the first mosaic floor of the Philippopolis synagogue. The benefactors of the synagogue had alternative Greek names, a practice attested among Jews in Stobi (Mac1), Philippi (Mac12) and Thessalonica (Mac15). A votive inscription from Stanimaka attributes the epithet εὐλογητός to the deity (Thr5, second century or later). Jewish epitaphs have been discovered at Byzie (Thr3, fourth–fifth century) and Heraclea Perinthos (Thr4, fifth–sixth century). The language of the inscriptions is Greek and the epitaph from Byzie attests to the use in a Jewish context of the title of presbyter by women.

Literary sources: third–fourth century CE: The *Passio* of St Philip, bishop of Heraclea, refers to Jews in the town during the Diocletianic

persecutions of 305–11 (*Acta Sanctorum* 57.9, 546). The *Passio* was composed in the fifth or sixth century, but the reliability of this source cannot be verified. **Twelfth century:** Jewish section in the market of Koila is listed in 1136 among the properties of the monastery of Christ Pantokrator in Constantinople. The *typikon* of the monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira near Bera (Feres, Greece) from 1152 provides annuities for a family of Jewish converts (Thomas and Constantinides-Hero 2001, II). However, it is not clear whether they were local Jews. Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3[4] forty Jews in Drama with communal leaders Rabbi Michael and Rabbi Joseph, twenty Jews in Christopolis, 400 Jews in Rodosto with communal leaders Rabbi Moses, Rabbi Abiyah and Rabbi Jacob, 200 Jews in Gallipoli with communal leaders Rabbi Elia Kapur, Rabbi Shabbetai Zutra and Rabbi Isaac Megas, and fifty Jews in Koila with communal leaders Rabbi Jacob, Rabbi Judah and Rabbi Shemaryah (Adler 1907; Starr 1939; Bowman 1985).

Jewish names: second–sixth century CE: Cosmianus-Joseph, Isaac (Philippopolis); Rebecca (Byzie); Eugenius (Heraclea); Helene (Stanimaka); Michael, Joseph (Drama). **Twelfth century:** Moses, Abiyah, Jacob (Rodosto); Elia Kapur, Shabbetai Zutra, Isaac Megas (Gallipoli); Jacob, Judah, Shemaryah (Koila).

Occupation: presbytera, rabbi.

Location: Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey).

Bibliography: Adler 1907, 14; Starr 1939, 84, 119, 134, 151, 163, 182–4, 195, 203–8, 231, nos. 2, 11, 70, 90, 108, 125, 140, 152–3, 182; Ankori 1959, 50–1; Goitein 1964, 298–301; Jacoby 1967, 170–80; Dieten 1975, 294; Bowman 1985, 335; Linder 1987, 408–10, no. 66; Mango 1990, 82–3; Koder 1991, 100–1, ch. 6, cap. 16; Déroche 1991, 72, 126–30, 214–19; de Lange 1992b, 38–40, no. 14, 45–6; Pozza and Ravegnani 1993, 39, no. 2, par. 5; Jacoby 1995, 222–5; Mango and Scott 1995, 554–5; Linder 1997, 36–7, no. 32, 150–1; Jacoby 1998, 32–4; Goitein 1999, IV: 447; Reinsch, Kambylis 2001, 179; Panayotov 2002, 320–5; Dölger and Müller 2003, 1.2, 67, no. 624; de Lange 2010, 43; Jacoby 2012, 236; Kaldellis and Krallis 2012, 458–9; Ševčenko 2011, 309–11.

Literary sources: fourth–seventh century CE: The existence of a synagogue in the Copper Market (Χαλκοπρατεῖα) of Constantinople in the fourth–fifth century is indicated by several Byzantine historians from the ninth–tenth century (Panayotov 2002). The law promulgated by Justinian at Constantinople on 8 February 553 (Nov. 146), permitting the use of

[4] Dates proposed by Jacoby 2008a, 145–6.

Greek in synagogue scriptural readings, and prohibiting the use of the Mishna, was probably initiated following complaints of Jews from the capital (Linder 1987, 1997; de Lange 2010). The *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati* (early 640s) describes the conversion of the Jewish merchant Jacob, a scholar of the Torah, who immigrated to Constantinople from Ptolemais-Akko in 602–3. In 632 he was involved in the illegal export of silk from Constantinople on behalf of a Greek merchant (*Doctrina* V.20, ed. Déroche 1991; Jacoby 1995). Patriarch Nikephoros of Constantinople (806–15) reports that Jews participated in the uprising against Patriarch Pyrhos in 641 (*Breviarium* 31.18, ed. Mango 1990). In 721–2 the emperor Leo III (716–40) issued a general edict that ordered the forcible baptism of Jews (Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 6214; Starr 1939; Mango and Scott 1997). **Ninth century:** In 873–4 the emperor Basil I (867–86) issued a general edict that ordered the forcible baptism of Jews (Theophanes cont., *Vita Basilii* 95, ed. Ševčenko 2012). His policy was continued by his son Leo VI (886–912) in a law promulgated sometime after 886 (Starr 1939; Linder 1997). **Tenth century:** The Book of the Eparch compiled under Leo VI and regulating the guilds in Constantinople prohibited the sale of raw silk to Jews (Starr 1939; Koder 1991). In 932 the emperor Romanos I Lekapenos (920–44) attempted forcibly to convert the Jewish population of Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire (Starr 1939; Dölger and Müller, 2003). **Eleventh century:** In *c.* 1040–8 the Karaite scholar Tobias ben Moses left Constantinople for Jerusalem. He was probably born in the Byzantine capital (Ankori 1959; de Lange 1992b). According to the chronicle of Bar Hebraeus, Jews participated in the riots of 1044 against the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–55) (Starr 1939). A Genizah letter refers to Israel ben Nathan, a Jewish merchant from Qayrawan, Egypt, who settled in Constantinople in 1045–9 (de Lange 1992b; Jacoby 1995). The Byzantine historian Michael Attaliates notes that during the revolt of John Vryennios in 1077 a number of Jewish houses in Pera (Galata) were destroyed by fire (Kaldellis and Krallis 2012). The *chrysobull* of the emperor Alexius I Komnenos (1081–1118) from May 1082 granting the Venetians the area of Perama (Eminönü, Istanbul) mentions a Jewish Gate (wharf) (Starr 1939; Jacoby 1967; Pozza and Ravegnani 1993). This is confirmed in 1148 by his daughter Anna Komnene (Starr 1939; Reinsch and Kambylis 2001). A Genizah letter by an Egyptian Jew, dated 1093–6, to his brother in Cairo (Fustat) reports a calendar feud between Rabbanites and Karaites, probably, in Constantinople (Starr 1939; Jacoby 1998). An anonymous Genizah letter dated 1096 refers to messianic excitement among Jews in Constantinople (Starr 1939). **Twelfth century:** An

anonymous Genizah letter from Seleucia in Cilicia dated 1137 mentions the Jew Abu-Ali, who owned a house in Constantinople, and his father-in-law Haver al-Baghdadi, a scholar and pancake-maker (Goitein 1964). Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3 2,000 Rabbanites and 500 Karaites living in Pera, Constantinople. He also notes a wall in the Jewish quarter separating the two communities. The communal leaders of the Rabbanites were Rabbi Abtalyon ha-Rav, Rabbi Obadiah, Rabbi Aaron Bechor Shoro, Rabbi Joseph Shir-Guru and Rabbi Elyakim ha-Parnas. Benjamin also mentions Solomon ha-Mizri, the emperor's physician. Benjamin notes that Jews were engaged in trade, tannery and silk production (see bibliography above). The Karaite Bible commentary of Yehudah ben Elijah Hadassi refers to Jewish silk-weavers in twelfth-century Constantinople (Jacoby 2012). In 1166 Manuel I Komnenos (1143–80) issued a *prostagma* (col. IV, Nov. LXXX) by which he transferred the Jews of Constantinople under the jurisdiction of the general courts in the capital (Starr 1939; Jacoby 1967). Jewish merchants from Constantinople trading in Alexandria are mentioned in a Genizah letter from 1160–70 (Goitein 1999, vol. IV). Nicetas Choniates, *Hist.* IV, refers to a Jewish cemetery on the eastern side of the Golden Horn (now Kasımpaşa, Beyoğlu disctrict, Istanbul) during the reign of Andronikos I Komnenos (1183–5) (Jacoby 1967; Dieten 1978).

Jewish names: seventh century: Jacob. **Eleventh century:** Tobias ben Moses, Israel ben Nathan. **Twelfth century:** Abu-Ali, Haver al-Baghdadi, Abtalyon ha-Rav, Obadiah, Aaron Bechor Shoro, Joseph Shir-Guru, Elyakim ha-Parnas, Solomon ha-Mizri.

Occupation: merchant, silk producer, tanner, scholar, rabbi, physician, pancake-maker.

4 *Macedonia*

Location: Stobi (near Gradsko, FYR Macedonia), Thessalonica (Greece), Beroea (Veria, Greece), Philippi (near Filippoi, Greece), Demitrizi (Dimitritsi, Greece)

Bibliography: Adler 1907, 11; Starr 1939, 171–2, 204–5, 230, 237, 239, nos. 119, 153, 182, 184, 189; Bowman 1985, 334–5; Melville Jones 1988, 113, 125, ch. 97, 113; de Lange 1992b, 41, nos. 22–3; Goitein 1999, V: 438–43; Vincić 2002–3, 257–9; Jacoby 2003, 124; *IJudO* I, 56–106, nos. Mac1–18; Nigdelis 2006, 334–42, no. 20; Wiseman 2009–11, 326–41, nos. 1–10.

Archaeological data: The existence of a synagogue in Stobi was known since 1931, when a column with the inscription of Claudius Tiberius

Polycharmus was found among the remains of one of the principal churches of Stobi (the 'Central Basilica'). The remains of the actual synagogue structure were excavated in 1970–5, revealing two buildings, one immediately above the other, below the level of the Central Basilica. The older edifice (designated Synagogue I) was identified as the synagogue of Polycharmus and was dated to the late second or early third century. The later building was designated Synagogue II and was dated to the late third or early fourth century. A small stepped platform standing against the east wall of the main hall of Synagogue II was probably used as a *bema*. Menorah graffiti were found on one of the walls. The synagogue was supplanted by a Christian church at the end of the fourth century or fifth century. A number of Jewish tombs were discovered in the eastern necropolis of Thessalonica, located just outside the walls of the ancient city on the site of the University of Thessaloniki. The necropolis was also used by pagans and Christians in the Roman and Byzantine periods. It contained a number of subterranean vaulted tombs, two of which were painted with menorahs, excavated in 1961 in the south-east end of the necropolis.[5]

Inscriptions: Sixteen published inscriptions and graffiti in Greek survive from the two synagogues of Stobi (Mac1–Mac5, Wiseman 2009–11). The inscription of Claudius Tiberius Polycharmus attests to the donation of the ground floor, including a *triclinium* and *tetrastoon*, of his house in Stobi to serve as a synagogue. The synagogue is designated a 'holy place' and the daily observance of Jewish law by the donor is recorded (Mac1, second–third century). Polycharmus held the title of πατῆρ συναγωγῆς ('father of the community') in the Jewish community of Stobi. Five other inscriptions mentioning his vow and donation are preserved on frescoes and on a marble plaque from Synagogue I (second–third century). Other findings include a votive plaque (second–third century), a seal with the image of a menorah and the name Eusthatius (fourth–fifth century), an inscription referring to the renovation of the *peripatos* of Synagogue II by the *phrontistes* Alexander, graffiti and a fragmentary mosaic inscription (Vincić 2002–3, fourth–fifth century).

Six Jewish epitaphs in Greek have been found in Beroea (Mac6–11, fourth–fifth century). The inscriptions refer to the holiness of the synagogue in Beroea (Mac6), list a three-year old *mellopresbyteros* (a presbyter-to-be, Mac8) and attest to the first occurrence of a Jewish psalm-singer in the Balkans (Mac9). Images of a menorah and shofar are inscribed on some of the epitaphs (Mac8, Mac10–11). The only Jewish epitaph found in

[5] See the discussion too by Noy in this volume.

Philippi is dated to the third–fourth century (Mac12). Six Jewish epitaphs in Greek have been found in Thessalonica (Mac14–Mac18; Nigdelis 2006). One inscription is preserved on a fresco from a Jewish tomb located in the eastern necropolis of Thessalonica. The fresco includes a menorah and the acclamation Κύριος μεθ' ἡμῶν ('The Lord is with us!'), which is a paraphrase of LXX Ps. 45.8 and 12 (Mac13, fourth century). Other epitaphs, inscribed on marble plaques used to seal the Jewish tombs from the eastern necropolis, are dated to the second–third century (Mac18) and fourth century (Mac14). Two epitaphs dated to the late third century are inscribed on reused sarcophagi. One epitaph (Mac15) includes a set fine for violation of the grave payable to the treasury of the local synagogue. Similar fine formulas are found on inscriptions from Stobi (Mac1), Beroea (Mac6) and Philippi (Mac12). The latest Jewish epitaph from Thessalonica is dated to the fifth–sixth century (Mac16). A Samaritan dedicatory inscription was discovered close to the Roman forum of Thessalonica. The inscription is dated to the fourth–sixth century and includes a blessing in Samaritan Hebrew, the text of Num. 6:22–7 in Greek and a dedication in Greek of a certain Siricius (Mac17).

Literary sources: first century CE: Philo mentions Macedonia as one of the regions with a Jewish colony in the first century (*Legat.* 281–2). The NT references to Paul's stay in Philippi (Acts 16:12–39), Thessalonica (Acts 17:1–9) and Beroea (Acts 17:10–15) reveal the existence of Jewish communities in these cities. Acts 20:6 refers to the celebration of Pesach in Philippi. **Eleventh century:** A Jew from Russia received a reference letter from Jews of Thessalonica in the eleventh century (Starr 1939). A Genizah letter dated 1088–90 describes the immigration of an Egyptian Jew to Thessalonica (Goitein 1999, vol. v; de Lange 1992b). An anonymous Genizah letter dated 1096, describes messianic excitement among Jews in Thessalonica during the time of the First Crusade (Starr 1939). **Twelfth century:** A Genizah letter dated *c.* 1130 mentions a Jewish college in Thessalonica (de Lange 1992b). Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3 500 Jews in Thessalonica with communal leaders Rabbi Samuel ha-Rav and his sons, who were noted scholars, Rabbi Shabbetai, Samuel's son-in-law, Rabbi Elia and Rabbi Michael. Benjamin notes that Jews in the city were engaged in the production of silk. He also reports fifty Jews in Demitrizi with communal leaders Rabbi Isaiah, Rabbi Makhir and Rabbi Eliab (see bibliography above). Jews of Thessalonica are mentioned in 1185–91 by Archbishop Eustathios of Thessalonica in his letters and account of the sack of the city by the Normans in 1185. He notes that they lived in the

outskirts of the city in the suburbs of Zemenikos and Krania (Starr 1939; Melville Jones 1988; Jacoby 2003).

Jewish names: second–third century: Claudius Tiberius Polycharmus Achyrius, Posidonia (Stobi); Marcus Aurelius Jacob Eutychius and his wife Anna Asyncrition, Marcus Aurelius Sabbatius (Thessalonica). **Fourth–sixth century**: Eusthatius, Alexander (Stobi); Joses of Alexandria, son of Paregorius, Maria daughter of Tertia and Leontius, Alexander, Theodosius, Geras, Justinus son of Gorgonius (Beroea); Aurelius Oxycholius (Philippi); Benjamin-Domitius, Abramios and his wife Theodote, Siricius (Samaritan), Apollonius son of Apollonius. **Twelfth century:** Samuel ha-Rav, Shabbetai, Elia, Michael (Thessalonica); Isaiah, Makhir, Eliab (Demitrizi).

Occupation: father of the community, *phrontistes*, *mellopresbyteros*, presbyter, silk producer, scholar, rabbi.

5 *Epiros, Acarnania, Aetolia and Phocis*

Location: Onchesmos (Saranda/Sarandë, Albania), Arta (Greece), Angelokastro (Greece), Aphilon/Achelous (near Angelokastro, Greece), Nafpaktos (Greece), Crissa (near Chrisso, Greece), Delphi (Delphoi, Greece).

Bibliography: Adler 1907, 10; Starr 1939, 229, no. 182; Bowman 1985, 333; *JIWE* I, 137–40, no. 107; *IJudO* I, 169–76, nos. Ach42–4; Nallbani *et al.* 2011, 66–73.

Archaeological data: The remains of a late antique synagogue were discovered in Saranda (ancient Onchesmos), on the Adriatic coast of Albania, in the early 1980s, but were not explored until 2003. The building, located near the central park of Saranda, comprises a large rectangular hall with adjoining rooms on the west. The main hall and the adjunct rooms are entirely covered in mosaics. One of the mosaics bears the images of a menorah, flanked by a shofar and ethrog. Another mosaic is filled with images of animals and trees, and includes a possible representation of a Torah-shrine. The synagogue has been dated to the fourth–fifth century. It was supplanted by a Christian church in the sixth century (Nallbani *et al.* 2011).

Inscriptions: Two manumissions of Jewish slaves (Ach42–3, 163/162 BCE and 158/157 BCE) and one manumission by a Jew (Ach44, second–first century BCE) are preserved *in situ* in the Temple of Apollo in Delphi. The manumissions explicitly state the ethnicity of the slaves ('a Jew by race'). A Jew from Onchesmos (Saranda) was buried in 521 in Venosa (*JIWE* I, no. 107).

Literary sources: first century CE: Philo mentions Aetolia as one of the regions with a Jewish colony in the first century (*Legat.* 281–2). **Twelfth century:** Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3 100 Jews in Arta with communal leaders Rabbi Shelahiah and Rabbi Hercules, thirty Jews in Aphilon/Achelous with communal leader Rabbi Shabbetai and 100 Jews in Nafpaktos (Kifto in the text) with communal leaders Rabbi Guri, Rabbi Shalom and Rabbi Abraham. He also reports 200 Jews in Crissa – with communal leaders Rabbi Solomon, Rabbi Hayyim and Rabbi Yedaiyah – camping outside the town and engaged in farming (see Bibliography above).

Jewish names: second century BCE: Ioudaios, Antigona and her daughters Theodora and Dorothea (Delphi). **Sixth century CE:** Isa (Onchesmos). **Twelfth century:** Shelahiah, Hercules (Arta); Shabbetai (Aphilon/Achelous); Guri, Shalom, Abraham (Nafpaktos); Solomon, Hayyim, Yedaiyah (Crissa).

Occupation: slave owner, rabbi, farming.

6 Thessaly and Phtiotis

Location: Larissa (Greece), Almyros (Greece), Phtiotic Thebes (Nea Anchialos, Greece), Pherae (Velestino, Greece), Rabenika (near Kamena Vurla, Greece), Jabustrissa (Larimna, Greece), Gardiki (Gardikia Hetera, near Pelasgia, Greece), Sinon Potamos (Lamia, Greece), Almyros (Greece), Bissena (near Agia, Greece).

Bibliography: Adler 1907, 10–1; Starr 1939, 229–30, no. 182; Bowman 1985, 334; *IJudO* I, 107–43, nos. Ach1–25.

Inscriptions: Eleven epitaphs in Greek from Larissa (Ach1–4, Ach8–14) and one from Pherae (Ach25) dated to the first–fourth century CE include the formula τῷ λαῷ χαίρειν ('farewell to the people'), probably referring to the Jewish community. Three epitaphs from Larissa are clearly Jewish (Ach6–7, second–third century): the image of a menorah and reference to a Jew holding the offices of *scholastikos* and *prostates* in the city (Ach5, fourth–sixth century). Nine Jewish epitaphs in Greek dated to the third–fourth century have been found in Phtiotic Thebes (Ach15–23). One inscription testifies to the use of the title *archegos* by women in a Jewish context (Ach18) while another includes the formulaic set fine for violation of the grave payable to the local synagogue (Ach23). The menorah is found on most epitaphs from Phtiotic Thebes. The only Jewish inscription

from Almyros, dated to the fifth–seventh century, is an epitaph with the menorah (Ach24).

Literary sources: first century CE: Thessaly had a Jewish colony in the first century (Philo, *Legat.* 281). **Twelfth century:** Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3 100 Jews in Jabustrissa with communal leaders Rabbi Samuel and Rabbi Netaniah, 100 Jews in Rabenika with communal leaders Rabbi Joseph, Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Isaac, fifty Jews in Sinon Potamos with communal leaders Rabbi Solomon and Rabbi Jacob and a small number of Jews in Gardiki, which was in ruins at the time of his visit. He also notes 400 Jews in Almyros (Armylo in the text) with communal leaders Rabbi Sheylah (Lombardo) ha-Rav, Rabbi Joseph ha-Parnas, and Rabbi Solomon ha-Rosh and 100 Jews in Bissena with communal leaders Rabbi Shabbetai ha-Rav, Rabbi Solomon and Rabbi Jacob (see Bibliography above).

Jewish names: second–seventh century: Boukolion son of Hermias and Pontiana, Cleopo, daughter of Quintas and wife of Judas, Alexander (Larissa); Esdras son of Jonathan, Saul and his wife Anna, Eusebius son of Alexander and his wife Theodora, Peristeria, Theodotos, Leontia, Paregorios, Eutychia, Hermogenes (Phtiotic Thebes); Judas and Asterias (Almyros). **Twelfth century:** Samuel, Netaniah (Jabustrissa), Joseph, Elazar, Isaac (Rabenika), Solomon, Jacob (Sinon Potamos), Sheylah (Lombardo) ha-Rav, Joseph ha-Parnas, Solomon ha-Rosh (Almyros), Shabbetai ha-Rav, Solomon, Jacob (Bissena).

Occupation: *scholastikos*, *prostate*s, *archegissa*, rabbi, parnas (religious leader and administrator of a community).

7 *Attica and Boeotia*

Location: Athens (Greece), Pireos (Greece), Thebes (Thiva, Greece), Oropos (Greece), Plataea (near Erythres, Greece).

Bibliography: Adler 1907, 10; Starr 1939, 203–8, 226–7, 229, nos. 153, 178, 182; Bowman 1985, 333–4; de Lange 1992b, 41, no. 23; Kalaitzaki 1993–4, 28–9; *JIWE* II, 400, no. 503; *IJudO* I, 144–67, 177–81, nos. Ach26–41, Ach45–6.

Archaeological data: The only archaeological evidence for the presence of Jews is a small revetment of Pentelic marble discovered in the Metroon of the Athenian Agora, bearing the image of a menorah flanked by a lulav and, probably, a shofar (*IJudO* I, 144–5).

Inscriptions: The manumission of Moschos son of Moschion from the sanctuary of Amphiaraus at Oropos (300–250 BCE) is the earliest evidence for the presence of Jews in the Balkans (Ach45), and is the only evidence for a Jew undertaking incubation in a pagan temple. The earliest Jewish inscription from Athens is an epitaph dated to the second century BCE (Ach33). Two inscriptions from statue bases of Herod the Great have been found in Athens (Ach38–9, 37–27 BCE and 27–24 BCE). The Jewish inscriptions from the city also include three epitaphs inscribed on small columns (*kioniskoi*) dated to the first century CE and one from Pireos dated to the third–fourth century (Ach26, Ach31–2; Ach40). Another epitaph from Athens inscribed on a *kioniskos* and dated to the second–third century refers to the office of πρόσχολος (assistant schoolmaster) held by a Jew (Ach27). The epitaphs, dated to the fourth–sixth centuries (Ach28–30, 34), denote the grave by the term κοιμητήριον (resting-place), which was widely used by Christians. The term is also used in a Jewish inscription from Phtiotic Thebes (Ach21, third century or later). The language of the inscriptions is Greek, while the only Hebrew used is the word *shalom* in a fragmentary bilingual epitaph from Athens (Ach36bis, fourth century or later). Three inscriptions from Athens (Ach35–7, first century CE) and one from Pireos (Ach41, third century BCE) refer to Samaritans, although it is not clear whether the designation indicates religious affiliation or geographical provenance. The only Jewish inscription from Plataea is an epitaph with the image of a menorah and is dated to the second century CE or later (Ach46). An epitaph of a native from Achaea was discovered in the Jewish catacomb of Villa Torlonia in Rome (*JIWE* II, no. 503, third–fourth century).

Literary sources: second century BCE: An Athenian decree from 106–105 BCE honours Hyrcanus I (135/134–104 BCE) for his benefactions to the city (Josephus, *Ant.* 14.149–55). The historical validity is doubtful. **First century CE:** Attica and Boeotia are regions with a Jewish colony in the first century (Philo, *Legat.* 281). Paul's stay in Athens reveals the existence of a synagogue in the city (Acts 17:17). **Eleventh century:** An anonymous Genizah letter, dated 1096, refers to messianic excitement among Jews in Thebes during the time of the First Crusade (Starr 1939). **Twelfth century:** A Genizah letter dated *c.* 1130 mentions a Jewish college in Thebes (de Lange 1992b). According to the *Annales Cavenses* Jews were among the captives taken by Roger II (1130–54) to Sicily after the capture of Thebes in 1147 (Kalaitzaki 1993–4). Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3 2,000 Jews in Thebes with communal leaders the Chief Rabbi Kuti and

his brother Moses, Rabbi Hiyya, Rabbi Elia Tirutot and Rabbi Yoktan who were noted scholars of the Talmud and the Mishnah. Benjamin notes that Jews were engaged in the production of silk and purple garments (see Bibliography above). Rabbi Abraham Zutra, a noted commentator of rabbinic texts, lived in Thebes in 1151–1200 (Starr 1939).

Jewish names: fourth–second century BCE: Moschos son of Moschion (Oropos), Simon/Simeon son of Ananias (Athens). **First–third century CE:** Ammia of Jerusalem, Matthaia daughter of Antiochus, Matthaia daughter of Philo, from Arad, wife of Socrates from Sidon, Benjamin son of Lachares (Athens), Demetrius son of Demetrius, (Pireos), Issachar son of Heraclides (Platea). **Fourth–sixth century:** Eutychia and her sons Athenaeus and Theoctistus, Theodula and Moses/Moschos, Jacob and Leontius, grandsons of Jacob of Caesarea (Athens). **Twelfth century:** Kuti and his brother Moses, Hiyya, Elia Tirutot, Yoktan, Abraham Zutra (Thebes).

Occupation: assistant schoolmaster, rabbi, commentator, scholar, silk producer.

8 Peloponnese

Location: Corinth (Greece), Patras (Greece), Sicyon (Sikaion, Greece), Argos (Greece), Mantinea (near Milea, Greece), Sparta (Greece), Coronea (Koroni, Greece), Methoni (Greece), Taenarum (near Kyparissos).

Bibliography: Adler 1907, 10; Starr 1939, 167–8, 229, nos. 115, 182; Bowman 1979a, 132–3; Bowman 1985, 333; Sullivan 1987, 112–13, 118–21, ch. 33, 35; Thomas and Constantinides-Hero 2001, I, 317; *IJudO* I, 181–200, nos. Ach47–56

Archaeological data: The archaeological evidence for the presence of Jews in Corinth includes a door lintel from a synagogue and a pier of a column capital bearing the images of a menorah, lulav and ethrog. The pier was discovered during the excavations of the theatre at Corinth and has been dated to the fifth century CE.

Inscriptions: The inscription of the synagogue of Corinth ([συνα]γωγὴ Ἑβρ[αίων]) is inscribed on a marble door lintel. It has been dated to the third century CE although a fourth–fifth century date is more likely (Ach47). Two fragmentary Jewish epitaphs in Greek have also been found in Corinth (Ach48–9, third–fourth century). One epitaph includes the word *mishkab* which was the standard Hebrew term for 'tomb'

corresponding to Greek κοιμητήριον (Ach49). Other findings from Corinth include an undated Samaritan amulet (Hebrew in Samaritan script) with the text of Exod. 15:3, 15:26, 38:8 and Num. 14:14 (Ach50). The epitaph of Aurelius Joses from Argos includes a formula against the violation of the grave which provides reference to the office of the patriarch and the *ethnarch* (Ach51). The inscription is dated to the third–fourth century and mentions the daily prayers offered to the God of Israel by Jews and the title σοφός (wise), which has not been attested before in Jewish inscriptions. An unpublished honorific inscription from Argos commemorates the donation of Aurelia Dioclea, daughter of Diocleus, *archisynagogos* of Argos.[6] The Jewish presence in Mantinea is confirmed by the dedication of Aurelius Elpides, dated to the fourth century, who provided funds for the *pronaos* of the local synagogue (Ach54). He held the title 'father of the people' (πατὴρ λαοῦ), i.e. of the Jewish community. Jews are also mentioned in an epitaph found in Arcadia (Ach52, second century or later), in a list of ephebes from Coronea (Ach53, 246 CE) and two inscriptions from Taenarum (Ach55–6, first–third century). Another inscription from Taenarum refers to the Jewish usage of the title *archon* (Ach56, third century).

Literary sources: second century BCE: According to 1 Macc. 15:23 Sicyon received a letter from Rome about the Jews in 140 BCE, which may indicate Jewish presence in the town. **First century CE:** Philo mentions Argos, Corinth and the Peloponnese as places with a Jewish colony in the first century (*Legat.* 281). In 66 CE 6,000 Jewish captives were sent from Magdala to work as slaves on the construction of the Isthmian canal near Corinth (*War* 3.540). Paul visited Corinth and stayed with a Jewish family of leather-workers and tent-makers – Aquila of Pontos and his wife Priscilla who were recent immigrants from Italy (Acts 18:1–3). The NT refers to a synagogue in the city and names the *archisynagogos* Crispus as the local Jewish leader (Acts 18:4–8; cf. Acts 18:12–13). Justin Martyr's dispute with Trypho apparently took place in Corinth (*Dial.* 1.1). Jerome's life of St Hilarion the Hermit mentions a Jewish dealer of old clothes in Methone in the fourth century (*Vita S. Hilarionis eremitae* 38, PL 23, 48). **Tenth century:** The testament of St Nikon the Metanoeite, written after 997 for the Church and Monastery of the Saviour, the Mother of God, and St Kyriake in Sparta reports the expulsion of Jews from Sparta by the saint (Thomas and Constantinides-Hero 2001). According to his

[6] Discovered in 1981 and then lost, this inscription is currently being prepared for publication from recently acquired photographs by Alexander Panayotov and Anastasia Loudarou.

vita, written in the mid-eleventh century, St Nikon expelled the Jews of Sparta in *c*. 987 because he held them responsible for the spread of the plague in the town. The *vita* also mentions Jews skilled in the finishing of wool fabrics (Starr 1939; Bowman 1979a; Sullivan 1987). **Twelfth century**: Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3 fifty Jews in Patras with communal leaders Rabbi Isaac, Rabbi Jacob and Rabbi Samuel and 300 Jews in Corinth with communal leaders Rabbi Leon, Rabbi Jacob and Rabbi Hezekiah (see Bibliography above).

Jewish names: first–fourth century CE: Crispus, Anna, Sarah (Corinth), Aurelius Joses (Argos), Panto daughter of Maronius (Arcadia), Aurelius Joses (Coronea), Aurelius Elpidis (Mantinea), Justus from Tiberias son of Andromache, Jonathan (Taenarum). **Twelfth century**: Isaac, Jacob, Samuel (Patras), Leon, Jacob, Hezekiah (Corinth).

Occupation: *archisynagogos*, father of the people, archon, old clothes dealer, producer of wool garments, rabbi.

9 Ionian islands

Location: Corfu (Greece), Cephalonia (Greece)

Bibliography: Adler 1907, 10; Starr 1939, 228, no. 182; Bowman 1985, 333; Kalaitzaki 1993–4, 28–9.

Literary sources: twelfth century CE: According to the *Annales Cavenses* Jews were among the captives taken by Roger II (1130–54) to Sicily after the capture of Corfu and Cephalonia in 1147 (Kalaitzaki 1993–4). Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3 one Jew, Rabbi Joseph, living in Corfu (see Bibliography above).

Jewish names: Joseph.

Occupation: rabbi.

10 Aegean islands (Greece)

Location: Euboea, Aegina (Egina), Delos, Rheneia, Paros, Syros, Naxos, Milos, Rhodes, Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Icaria, Cos.

Bibliography: Adler 1907, 14; Starr 1939, 197–8, 232, nos. 143, 182; Bowman 1985, 335–6; Argenti 1966, 40–4; *JIWE* I, 1993, 164–5, no. 125; Linder 1997, 160–6, nos. 341–3; Holo 2000, 10–12; *IJudO* I, 201–47, nos. Ach57–74; *IJudO* II, 38–63, nos. 1–11; Jacoby 2009, 163–4; *CIIP* I.1, 45–7, no. 3.

Archaeological data: Archaeological evidence includes three synagogue buildings on Delos, Aegina and Chios and a number of artefacts. The building on Delos, discovered in 1912–13, was identified as a synagogue solely on the basis of five dedications to *Theos Hypsistos* and *Hypsistos* found in situ (*IJudO* I). The site was excavated for a second time in 1965 and a new survey of the building was conducted in 2000–3. The building on the eastern seashore of Delos, a short distance from the harbour of Ghournia, is located in what seems like a residential quarter, close to the stadium and the gymnasium. It was probably built in the second century BCE and renovated in the middle of the first century BCE. The building functioned as a public edifice at least until the second–third century CE and was later used by lime-burners whose kiln is still visible in the centre of the main hall. Three clay lamps bearing the image of a menorah and dated to the sixth–seventh century were found on Delos (but not in the 'synagogue').

The synagogue of Aegina is located near the harbour of the ancient city. It was excavated in 1928 but found in poor condition, with only a few parts of the original walls preserved. The synagogue floor comprises a mosaic with geometrical design, on the eastern edge of which there is a white strip which has been identified as a safety mark indicating the spot where the stairs leading to the bema or the Ark began. The presence of such a construction, however, remains uncertain. The entrance to the synagogue hall is marked on the west by two mosaic inscriptions. The synagogue was probably built in the fourth century and destroyed in the sixth–seventh century (*IJudO* I).

Recently, a new synagogue building was discovered in Chios. The building is located across from the Park A. Theoloudi on Agion Apostolon Street in Chios town and is currently being excavated by the Third Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities. The floor of this rectangular structure is covered by an elaborate mosaic incorporating two dedicatory inscriptions in Greek. On the basis of preliminary photographs of the mosaic inscriptions the synagogue could be dated to the third–fifth century.

Inscriptions: Five dedications in Greek to *Theos Hypsistos* and *Hypsistos* have been found in the building designated as the synagogue of Delos (Ach60–4).[7] The inscriptions are dated to the first century BCE (Ach62–3) and first–second century CE (Ach60–1, 64) and refer to vows, healing through God's miraculous intervention and to a successful manumission. Another votive inscription (προσευχή is used here with the meaning of a prayer) was discovered in a residential *insula* behind the stadium of Delos

[7] On this synagogue, see the chapter by Noy in this volume.

(Ach65). This is only the second building, apart from the synagogue, with a subterranean cistern on Delos, leading some to suggest that it was also used by Jews. This remains an open question before further excavations of the site and surrounding area have taken place.

Two epitaphs found on Rheneia, the burial island of Delos, include allusions to the LXX. The epitaphs, dated to the second–first century BCE, provide the first epigraphic evidence for the observance of the Day of Atonement in the diaspora (Ach70–1).

In 1979 two Samaritan honorific inscriptions were discovered close to the synagogue (Ach66–7), dated to *c*. 250–175 BCE (Ach66) and *c*. 150–50 BCE (Ach67). They honour two citizens of Crete, from Heraclion and Knossos, for their benefactions towards the Samaritan community on the island. The Samaritans on Delos called themselves 'Israelites' and referred to the offerings paid by them to the temple on Mt Gerizim (Ach66, lines 1–2, Ach67, lines 1–3). Herod Antipas was honoured with a statue and inscription in the Temple of Apollo on Delos (Ach74, 4–39 CE) and another inscription from Delos honouring his father Herod the Great was found on Syros (Ach74, 37–4 BCE). Two inscriptions from the mosaic floor of the Aegina synagogue refer to the donation of Theodorus and his son Theodorus the Younger, who provided funds for and oversaw the completion of the mosaic (Ach58–9). The inscriptions are dated to 300–50 CE and provide reference to the offices of *archisynagogos* and *phrontistes*. The two inscriptions from the mosaic floor of the newly discovered synagogue in Chios refer to the donation, following a vow, of Ilasius and his son Damalius, who provided funds for and oversaw the construction and decoration of the building. One of the inscriptions, located close to the entrance of the main hall, refers to LXX Ps. 119:165. The inscriptions can be dated to the third–fifth century according to recently published photographs online.[8] Other Jewish inscriptions from the Aegean include five epitaphs from Euboea (Ach57, fifth–seventh century), Chios (*IJudO* II, no. 4, second–fourth century), Cos (*IJudO* II, nos. 7–8, first–third century) and a fragmentary honorific inscription from Samos (*IJudO* II, no. 5, third century or later). The latter refers to the local synagogue and lists presbyters and the *archisynagogos* among the leaders of the Jewish community (*IJudO* II, no. 5, lines 1–4). Jews are also mentioned in inscriptions from Icaria (*IJudO* II, no. 5a, fifth–sixth century) and Syros (Ach72–3, fourth

[8] Kostas Tzagarakis (online: www.naturedigital.blogspot.com/2010/09/old-synagogue-chios.html, accessed April 2013.

century or later). The inscriptions from Syros, inscribed on the rocks of Grammata Bay to the north-west, include an invocation for a safe sea voyage by a crew of sailors from Naxos and a thanksgiving for safe return from the sea by a Jewish sailor. Ach72 includes images of a menorah, lulav and a jug, and the formula Κύριε βοήθη ('Lord help!'), which was widely used by Christians (Ach72, line 1). Two inscriptions in Greek referring to Jews have been found outside the Aegean. These include an epitaph of a Jew from Milos buried in Taranto (*JIWE* I, no. 125, seventh–eighth century) and a donation to Herod's temple by natives of Rhodes discovered on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (*CIIP* I.1, no. 3; 18–17 BCE).

Literary sources: second–first century BCE: According to 1 Macc. 15:22–3 Delos, Samos, Cos and Rhodes received a letter from Rome about the Jews in 140 BCE, which may indicate Jewish presence in these islands. Josephus lists two decrees from around 49 BCE issued by the Roman consul L. Cornelius Lentulus and by Julius Caesar, which reaffirmed the exemption of the Jews of Delos and Paros from military service and recognized their right to live according to their customs (*Ant.* 14.213–16; 14.231–2). Josephus cites Strabo that shortly after 88 BCE Mithridates VI of Pontos (120–63 BCE) raided Cos and seized 800 talents belonging to the Jews. Josephus argues that the money was actually the annual Temple tax sent by the Jews of Asia Minor (*Ant.* 14.112–13; *GLAJJ* I, no. 102). He also notes that the citizens of Chios received many benefactions from Herod the Great in 14 BCE (*Ant.* 16.18). Other places that benefited from Herod's generosity were Cos and Rhodes (*War* 1.423–4; *Ant.* 16.147–9). **First century CE**: Philo mentions Euboea as one of the islands with a Jewish colony in the first century (*Legat.* 282). **Tenth–eleventh century**: A Genizah letter written by the Jewish merchant Moshe Agura in Rhodes suggests that he moved to the island after the Byzantine reconquest of Crete in 961 (Holo 2000; Jacoby 2009). In 1049 Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–55) issued a *chrysobull* assigning fifteen, previously free, Jewish families of Chios to the monastery of Nea Moni. The families were obligated to pay annual capitation-tax (*kephaletion*) to the monastery and were exempt from any other taxes and *angaria* imposed by military or civil authorities. The *chrysobull* was reaffirmed in August 1062 by Constantine X Doukas (1059–67) with a number of additions. The Jews were ordered to live on land owned by the monastery, their movement was restricted and their children were assigned to the monastery. The settlement of foreign Jews on Chios was forbidden (Argenti 1966; Linder 1997). The *chrysobull* was reaffirmed again in 1079 by Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1078–81). **Twelfth century**: Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3 from Mytilini that Jews were

living in ten localities in the island of Lesbos. He also reports 400 Jews in Chios with communal leaders Rabbi Elia Heyman and Rabbi Shabbetai, 300 Jews in Samos with communal leaders Rabbi Shemaryah, Rabbi Obadiah and Rabbi Joel and 400 Jews in Rhodes with communal leaders Rabbi Abba, Rabbi Hannanel and Rabbi Elia (see Bibliography above).

Jewish names: first–third century CE: Eutychus, Aurelius Gaius (Cos); **fourth–sixth century:** Theodorus and his son Theodorus the Younger (Aegina), Symmachus, Ilasius and his son Damalius (Chios); Eunomius, Heortylis (Syros), Euphranor son of Publius (Euboea). **Seventh–eighth century:** Leon son of David (Milos). **Tenth century:** Moshe Agura (Rhodes). **Twelfth century:** Elia Heyman, Shabbetai (Chios), Shemaryah, Obadiah, Joel (Samos), Abba, Hannanel, Elia (Rhodes).

Occupation: *archisynagogos*, *phrontistes*, rabbi, merchant.

11 Crete

Location: Arcades (Kassanoi), Kissamos (Kastelli Kissamou), Gortyn (Gortyna).

Bibliography: van der Horst 1988, 184–8; Goitein 1999, IV: 447; Holo 2000, 10–12; *IJudO* I, 249–53, Cre1–3; Jacoby 2009, 163–4.

Inscriptions: Three epitaphs from Arcades (Cre1–2, third–fourth century) and Kissamos (Cre3, fourth–fifth century) attest to Jewish presence. The language is Greek. The epitaph from Kissamos testifies to the use of the titles presbyter and *archisynagogos* by women in a Jewish context. A small square-shaped clay stamp with images of a menorah, lulav and ethrog on one side and a ship on the other, and a number of Greek letters inscribed on the edges, is preserved in the Historical Museum of Crete (inv. no. 1084 [AII 259]).

Literary sources: second century BCE: According to 1 Macc. 15:22–3 Gortyn received a letter from Rome about the Jews in 140 BCE, which may indicate Jewish presence on Crete. **First century CE:** Philo mentions Crete as one of the islands with a Jewish colony in the first century (*Legat.* 281–2). Josephus married a Jewish woman from a leading Jewish family of Crete (*Life* 427). He also notes that the impostor Alexander, who claimed to be the son of Herod the Great, received financial help from Cretan Jews (*War* 2.101–3; *Ant.* 17.324–38). Cretan Jews were in Jerusalem for Pentecost as suggested by Acts 2:9–11. **Fifth century**: Socrates Scholasticus

reports that a Jewish impostor claiming to be Moses gathered a large following among Cretan Jews, probably in the 430s, and led them into the sea, where they drowned or were rescued and converted to Christianity (*Hist. eccl.* 7.38; PG 67, 825–8). **Tenth–twelfth century:** The Jewish merchant Moshe Agura settled on Rhodes after the Byzantine reconquest of Crete in 961 (Holo 2000; Jacoby 2009). Jewish merchants from Crete were trading in Alexandria in 1160–70 (Goitein 1999, vol. IV).

Jewish names: third–fifth century CE: Joseph son of Theodorus and his son Judas, Joseph and his wife Berenice (Arcades); Sophia (Kissamos and Gortyn). **Tenth century**: Moshe Agura.

Occupation: *presbytera*, *archisynagogissa*, merchant.

12 Cyprus

Location: Lapethos (Karavas), Morphou (Güzelyurt), Golgoi (near Athienou), Salamis (near Famagusta), Kourion (Akrotiri area), Kition (Larnaka), Paphos.

Bibliography: Adler 1907, 14–15; Starr 1939, 185, 218, 232, nos. 127, 165, 182; Bowman 1985, 336; de Lange 1992a, 21–2, 25, n. 10, 29; van der Horst 2003, 110–14; *IJudO* III, 213–26, nos. Cyp1–8; Pucci Ben Zeev 2005, 79–80, 85–7, nos. 50, 57–8.

Inscriptions: The earliest inscriptions attesting to Jewish presence are three epitaphs in Phoenician from Kition (Cyp6–8, fourth century BCE). A fragmentary inscription in Greek from Kourion mentions the name Onias (Cyp5, second to first century BCE). Three inscriptions refer to Jewish offices such as presbyter and *archisynagogos* and to the renovation of a synagogue building in Golgoi (Cyp3, fourth–sixth century CE) and donation of furnishings by a rabbi in Lapethos (Cyp1, fourth–sixth century). The office of *archon* is attested in a Jewish context in Salamis (Cyp4, third–fourth century). A round-shaped bread stamp with the image of a menorah, lulav and amphora (or ethrog) on one side and Greek inscription on the other was discovered in Morphou (Cyp2, third–fourth century or later).

Literary sources: second–first century BCE: According to 1 Macc. 15.22–3 Cyprus received a letter from Rome about the Jews in 140 BCE, which may indicate Jewish presence on the island. Josephus reports, in *Ant.* 13.284, Jews living in Cyprus during the reign of Ptolemy IX Soter II (142–80

BCE). He also mentions that Herod the Great (73/74–4 BCE) had interests in the copper mines at Soli on the island (*Ant.* 16.128). **First–third century CE**: Cyprus is one of the islands with a Jewish colony (Philo, *Legat.* 281–2). Atomus is a Jewish magician from Cyprus (Josephus, *Ant.* 20.142). Paul's companion Barnabas came from a Cypriot Levite family (Acts 4:36). In Cyprus, Paul and Barnabas visited the synagogue in Salamis (Acts 13:5) and encountered a Jewish magician in Paphos called Elymas bar Jesus (13:6–11). The Jews of Cyprus participated, under the leadership of Artemion, in the revolt under Trajan in 115–17 CE, most notably in Salamis (Cassius Dio, *Hist. Rom.* 68.32; Eusebius, *Chron.*, Pucci Ben Zeev 2005). The Cypriot community was annihilated during the revolt and Jews were banned from the island. **Seventh century:** Eutychius, patriarch of Alexandria (932–40), claims that during the reign of Heraclius (610–41) Cypriot Jews attacked Christian monasteries on the island (*Annales* 2.220–3; PG 111, 1084–5). **Eleventh century:** According to the chronicle of Matthew of Edessa, the Jew Moses of Cyprus was summoned to Constantinople to consult the emperor Basil II (976–1025) in the controversy over the date of Easter in 1007 (Starr 1939). **Twelfth century:** In *c.* 1110 Nicholas Mouzalon noted that Jews were employed as tax collectors on the island (Starr 1939). Benjamin of Tudela reports in 1161–3 Rabbanite and Karaite communities in Cyprus and the existence of another Jewish sect, the Epikursin, who were observing the Sabbath on Saturday evening (see Bibliography above). In an unpublished discourse against the Jews, St Neophytos the Recluse (1134–1214) refers to Cypriot Jews and their eschatological expectations (de Lange 1992a).

Jewish names: fourth century BCE: Haggai, Muttun-'Astart, Shalom (Kition). **Second–first century BCE:** Onias (Kourion). **First–second century CE**: Artemion, Atomus, Joseph-Barnabas, Elymas bar Jesus (Paphos). **Third–sixth century:** Attikos (Lapethos), Joses son of Synesius (Golgoi), Ananias (Salamis); **eleventh century:** Moses.

Occupation: rabbi, presbyter, *archisynagogos*, *archon*, magician.

13 Unknown location

Literary sources: A Genizah letter dated *c.* 1040 from the Rabbanite community of Alexandria to the community of Marathia. The letter is concerned with the ransom of Jews from Marathia captured by Arab pirates and mentions the brothers Elijah and Leo of Marathia. The location of Marathia cannot be established with certainty – the place name is found

1. Senia (Senj, Croatia)
2. Asseria (Benkovac, Croatia)
3. Peratovci (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
4. Salona (Split, Croatia)
5. Mogorjelo (near Čapljina, Bosnia and Herzegovina)
6. Doclea (Podgorica, Montenegro)
7. Dorticum (Vrav, Bulgaria)
8. Oescus (Gigen, Bulgaria)
9. Philippopolis (Plovdiv, Bulgaria)
10. Stanimaka (Assenovgrad, Bulgaria)
11. Drama (Greece)
12. Christopolis (Kavala, Greece)
13. Rodosto (Tekirdağ,Turkey)
14. Heraclea Perinthos (Marmara Ereğlisi, Turkey)
15. Byzie (Vize, Turkey)
16. Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey)
17. Gallipoli (Gelibolu,Turkey)
18. Koila (Kales near Eceabat, Turkey)
19. Philippi (near Filippoi, Greece)
20. Demitrizi (Dimitritsi, Greece)
21. Thessalonica (Thessaloniki, Greece)
22. Stobi (near Gradsko, FYR Macedonia)
23. Beroea (Veria, Greece)
24. Onchesmos (Saranda, Albania)
25. Arta (Greece)
26. Aphilon/Achelous (near Angelokastro, Greece)
27. Nafpaktos (Greece)
28. Crissa (near Chrisso, Greece)
29. Delphi (Delphoi, Greece)
30. Bissena (near Agia, Greece)
31. Larissa (Greece)
32. Pherae (Velestino, Greece),
33. Phtiotic Thebes (Near Anchialos, Greece)
34. Almyros (Greece)
35. Gardiki (Gardikia Hetera, near Pelasgia, Greece)
36. Sinon Potamos (Lamia,Greece),
37. Rabenika (near Kamena Vurla, Greece)
38. Jabustrissa (Larimna, Greece)
39. Thebes (Thiva,Greece)
40. Oropus (Oropos, Greece)
41. Athens and Pireos (Greece)
42. Plataea (near Erythres, Greece)
43. Corinth (Greece)
44. Sicyon (Sikaion, Greece)
45. Patras (Greece)
46. Argos (Greece)
47. Mantinea (near Milea, Greece)
48. Sparta (Greece)
49. Taenarum (near Kyparissos, Greece)
50. Coronea (Koroni, Greece)
51. Methoni (Greece)
52. Corfu (Greece)
53. Cephalonia (Greece)
54. Euboea (Greece)
55. Aegina (Egina, Greece)
56. Syros (Greece)
57. Delos and Rheneia (Greece)
58. Naxos (Greece)
59. Paros (Greece)
60. Milos (Greece)
61. Kissamos, Crete (Greece)
62. Gortyn, Crete (Greece)
63. Arcades, Cretc (Greece)
64. Rhodes (Greece)
65. Cos (Greece)
66. Icaria (Greece)
67. Samos (Greece)
68. Chios (Greece)
69. Lesbos (Greece)
70. Morphou (Güzelyurt,Cyprus)
71. Lapethos (Karavas, Cyprus)
72. Salamis (near Famagusta, Cyprus)
73. Kition (Larnaka, Cyprus)
74. Golgoi (near Athienou, Cyprus)
75. Kourion (Akrotiri area, Cyprus)
76. Paphos (Cyprus)

Figure 4.1 Map of the Balkans. Outline map provided by http://d-maps.com/.

in Aetolia, Thessaly and the Peloponnese (Starr 1939, 194–5, no. 139; de Lange 1992b, 39, no. 16).

Summary of findings

The evidence discussed attests to the continuous presence of Jews and Jewish communities in the Balkans, the Aegean and Cyprus until the end of the twelfth century and suggests that Jews were well established in the main administrative centres of these areas, enjoying relative peace and prosperity until the seventh century. The limitation of Jewish civic and political rights in the Byzantine Empire did not have an overall negative impact on Jewish communal life and economic activity as shown by the evidence related to the period of the eighth to twelfth centuries.

PART II

Historiography

CHAPTER 5

Origen and the Jews: *Jewish–Greek and Jewish–Christian relations*

William Horbury

From time to time journals print series under titles like 'Revised Reviews' or 'Books to Remember', on books still notable after a quarter of a century or more. Nicholas de Lange's *Origen and the Jews* (1976) would certainly merit a full 'revised review'.[1] Attention here is restricted, however, to one alluring topic of the book, its recovery of lost lineaments of Greek-speaking Judaism.

The scope of *Origen and the Jews* is broad. It offers, to quote the subtitle, 'studies in Jewish-Christian relations in third-century Palestine' – but that does not mean simply studies of debate between church and synagogue, although these are central in the book. Origen's manifold contact with living Judaism is the focus of inquiry. He becomes a witness not just to controversy, but to Jewish life and literature, and above all to the Jewish biblical study on which the Christian church depended. All this, as is urged by Nicholas de Lange, falls within the scope of 'Jewish–Christian relations', which must include 'the interpenetration of Jewish and Christian ideas'.[2]

In the tradition of study which his book continues, work on Jewish biblical interpretation and history as attested in the church fathers had appeared from scholars of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* including Heinrich Graetz, Samuel Krauss, Arthur Marmorstein and Louis Ginzberg. Then from the Christian side in the 1930s the history of writings *adversus Iudaeos* was studied by Lukyn Williams, and of Jewish–Christian relations in antiquity – 'the conflict of the church and the synagogue' – by James Parkes.[3] Marcel Simon's reconsideration of this conflict belongs in substance to the same decade.[4] After the Second World War these works

[1] de Lange 1976; among longer reviews are those in *VC* 32 (1978), 147–8 (J. C. M. van Winden); *JTS* 30 (1979), 324–8 (the present writer); *JSS* 35 (1980), 118–20 (A. P. Hayman).

[2] de Lange 1976, 12–13.

[3] Parkes 1934; Lukyn Williams 1935.

[4] Simon 1986; the book arose from a thesis finished before the Second World War.

began to be matched, especially in the 1970s, by books on individual church fathers and Judaism.[5]

Origen and the Jews is one of at least six such books from this decade, and others followed. Its subject is shared with H. Bietenhard on Caesarea, Origen and the Jews (1974) – *Origen and the Jews* was finished before this work came to the author's notice – and G. Sgherri on church and synagogue in Origen (1982), a massive study which treats Origen's idea of the Christian church, but suggests that, given Origen's scriptural culture, this can hardly be appreciated apart from his knowledge of Jews and his view of the 'synagogue', both past and present.[6] *Origen and the Jews* stands out, however, for its philological and historical emphasis and range, and not least for its recovery, through Origen's biblical study, preaching, teaching and apologetic, of elements of Jewish–Greek speech, tradition and literature.

Here this aspect of the book is viewed first of all in the setting of the author's earlier work, and of the study of Jewish and early Christian Hellenism towards the time when he wrote. Then subsequent development and questioning of approaches to third-century Jewish–Greek tradition is noted, with some suggestions on the book's continuing significance.

I

Origen and the Jews arose from an Oxford thesis submitted in 1970. In hindsight it can be viewed with some of the author's work in the rest of this decade. He was editing, translating and commenting on Origen's letter to Africanus on the History of Susanna.[7] In Cambridge he initiated with Professor Christopher Stead a reading group, one of the roots of the present Cambridge Patristic Seminar; texts included Origen's homily on the witch of Endor. In the same years, however, he was also surveying Jewish attitudes to the Roman Empire, and ancient anti-Semitism.[8] Thus the humanist devotion to Origen, which makes *Origen and the Jews*

[5] Blumenkranz 1973; Neusner 1971; Wilken 1971; Bietenhard 1974; Aziza 1977; Poinsotte 1979.

[6] Bietenhard 1974; Sgherri 1982. The argument for a somewhat higher view of Origen's knowledge of Hebrew which was propounded by Sgherri 1974–5, is appreciatively criticized by de Lange 1976, 153–4 n. 51, and a suggestion on *deuterosis* by Sgherri is acknowledged ibid., 163 n. 67. On Origen's Hebrew knowledge Sgherri 1982, 44 n. 145, comments that he is not far from de Lange's position, but would hold to the possibility that Origen did consult Hebrew manuscripts.

[7] See Harl and de Lange 1983; the authors' joint preface is dated October 1980. They note that they read both the Philokalia and the Letter together before preparing their contributions individually; Nicholas de Lange undertook the redaction of the *apparatus criticus* for the Philokalia, as well as establishing a fresh text for the Letter to Africanus.

[8] de Lange 1978, 255–81; de Lange and C. Thoma 1978.

a vivid 'translation' of this ancient author, continued alongside an engagement with the political questions of Jewish existence under Greek and Roman rule. These questions appear in *Origen and the Jews*, but they also lie behind some of the doubts voiced by other scholars about the tradition of inquiry into Greek-speaking Judaism.

Origen and the Jews was part of a surge in the study both of Origen and of Jewish–Christian relations. It also shared, however, in a renewal of attention to Jewish and early Christian Hellenism. In the 1930s and 1940s seminal work in these fields had come from E. R. Goodenough, Elias Bickerman, and Wilfred Knox.[9] The inquiry was pursued over the whole period of late antiquity in F.-J. Dölger's studies of 'Antike und Christentum', to be followed after his death by the *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, edited by T. Klauser (issued from 1941 onwards).[10] Work in these areas was continued after the Second World War by Goodenough, Bickerman and others. It could be accompanied not only by admiration for Hellenism, but also by attempts to understand Christianity, and perhaps also Judaism, in varying degrees as a 'new humanism'.[11]

In 1967 the subject of *Origen and the Jews* was suggested by the author's doctoral supervisor, Henry Chadwick, who had been taught by Knox and continued his Hellenistic studies.[12] In 1966 Martin Hengel, taking up Bickerman's interpretations of Jewish Hellenism, had written on a second- or third-century Greek synagogue donation inscription from Stobi, and the political terms which it connects with *Ioudaismos*; and in 1969 his monumental *Judentum und Hellenismus* appeared.[13] In 1968 E. R. Goodenough published the last volume of *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, a work issued from 1953 onwards which presented material culture of the Greek-speaking diaspora in the Roman Empire together with an argument, begun in Goodenough's work in the 1930s, for Jewish art as indicating non-rabbinic forms of Jewish religion. The currency of Jewish Greek in Judaea itself in the time of Hadrian was reaffirmed in the 1960s through publications of Greek documents and letters, and a Greek

[9] Goodenough 1935; Bickermann 1937; Knox 1937, 61–111; Knox 1939; Knox 1944.

[10] Dölger 1929–40; the issue of the last volume was completed in 1950 under the editorship of T. Klauser.

[11] Rahner 1957, 6 (the articles gathered here, written in the 1930s and early 1940s, seek to show the way to a Christian humanism); Baumgarten 2010, 292 (the Jews who 'got it right' for Bickerman were full participants in Graeco-Roman culture who could take the lessons learned from Greeks and 'talk back' to the non-Jewish world).

[12] de Lange 1976, x; Chadwick 1947; Chadwick 1966; Chadwick 1967.

[13] Hengel 1996a; Hengel 1969.

scroll of the Minor Prophets, all taken into caves in the Judaean wilderness by Jews seeking refuge during the repression of Bar Kokhba's revolt.[14]

Yet *Origen and the Jews* deals with a period later than that of Hadrian or that treated in the main body of Hengel's writings, and unlike Goodenough's work it concentrates on Judaea rather than the diaspora. The book is on a third-century representative of Christian Hellenism, a Christian Hellenist who is impelled also towards a Christian Hebraism, in a Judaea which nurtures rabbinic teaching transmitted in Hebrew but remains a Roman province in which Greek as well as Aramaic is current, and used by the Rabbis.

Some further antecedents of the Jewish–Greek studies in *Origen and the Jews* then seem particularly close to the setting and themes of the book. In the 1960s Henry Chadwick's studies of Jewish and Christian Hellenism reflected a university situation in which it was natural to hold together, as Nicholas de Lange also does, classical, patristic and Hebrew studies, Roman history, Jewish history and Church history.[15] In this context the *Oxford Patristic Greek Lexicon*, issued between 1961 and 1968, was highlighting vocabulary used by Christians and stimulating by implication the quest to 'place' it vis-à-vis the Greek of the Septuagint and of Philo, Josephus and other Jewish writers.[16] Then a keen interest in the Greek (including Christian–Greek) setting of rabbinic language and thought was represented in Jewish studies in England in the 1950s and 1960s by such scholars as David Daube, Siegfried Stein and Raphael Loewe.[17]

Lastly, an antecedent of importance for the argument of the book is formed by writings published from the 1940s onwards by Marcel Simon and Saul Lieberman. Simon was interested in both Jewish and Christian Hellenism. His *Verus Israel* took up W. Bousset's arguments for the continued development of Greek–Jewish literature and prayer after the time of Josephus, in Jewish communities which often displayed considerable *éclat*.[18] Simon thus brought together, as Nicholas de Lange would do, Jewish–Christian relations and Jewish Hellenism.

Lieberman, following earlier study of rabbinic contacts with Greek language and thought, showed the importance of the Greek language

[14] Benoit, Milik and de Vaux 1961; Lifschitz 1962a; Lifschitz 1962b; Barthélemy 1963.

[15] See n. 12, above.

[16] Lampe 1961–8; Harl 1963, 419.

[17] For example in Daube 1953, 27–44; Stein 1957a; Stein 1957b; Loewe 1961.

[18] Simon 1986, xi, 49–60, on the Jewish source in the Clementine *Homilies* 4–6, which he dates under Hadrian, and the prayers in the *Apostolic Constitutions* 7.33–7, which he dates in the mid-second century or later, noting their use of Aquila. On these see further, respectively, Carleton Paget 2010a, 417–92; van der Horst and Newman 2008, 1–93.

and Hellenism in Roman Palestine, as reflected in rabbinic literature.[19] He noted, likewise anticipating the interests of *Origen and the Jews*, that Greek culture enabled Palestinian rabbis to spread Judaism among gentiles and discuss religion with Christians; 'they were able to compete even with Gentile Christians, including those who got their education in Greek schools, in winning proselytes'.[20] Both Simon and Lieberman gave attention to the period which is immediately illuminated by Origen, the third century.

II

Since the appearance of *Origen and the Jews* in 1976, work in this area by Lieberman and Simon as well as de Lange himself has been debated. With regard to languages, the importance of Aramaic in third-century Palestine, including rabbinic circles, has been reaffirmed, although this of course does not detract from recognition of the concurrent influence of Greek, and its importance for Caesarean Jews in particular.[21] The relative unimportance of Hebrew, despite the prestige attached to it, in Judaea in the second and early third centuries by comparison with the fourth, has been further emphasized by Seth Schwartz, Nicholas de Lange and Philip Alexander.[22] It has indeed been asked whether, in view of the existing prestige of Hebrew in the early second century, rabbinic third-century use can be viewed with de Lange as part of a 'revival'; but the term seems justified by the probable limits of the vernacular use of Hebrew, despite its prestige.[23] The influence of Hellenism on Semitic-language rabbinic discourse too has been detected increasingly in reaction against it, including reaction to Christian Hellenism.[24]

Then, however, Seth Schwartz suggests that Lieberman's work can lead (although this was unintended by the author) to an underrating of intellectual and political friction between Jews and Rome. Some readers, he thinks, glide from the rabbinic employment of Greek language and thought illustrated by Lieberman into a premature judgement that rabbis

[19] Lieberman 1962 and Lieberman 1965; these works are set within a brief outline of work on rabbinic contacts with Greek culture since Krauss by Stemberger 2011, 63.

[20] Lieberman 1962, 66–7.

[21] See for instance Millar 2010, 42; the book's concern with Caesarea rather than the countryside was stressed in this connection by de Lange 1976, 151, n. 56.

[22] Schwartz 1995, 31–5, revised and shortened in Schwartz 2005, 81–3; de Lange 1996b; Alexander 1999, 73–6.

[23] Gallagher 2012, 118–19; review by de Lange 2013a.

[24] See Visotzky 1995; Cohen 2001; Boyarin 2007.

were simply normal examples of the élites of the eastern Roman provinces; but 'the rabbis cannot readily be "normalized"'.[25] As Schwartz urges elsewhere, simply to note the extent of their 'hellenization' is not fully to confront the problems of their integration into Roman life.[26]

A similar point is made apart from discussion of Lieberman when G. G. Stroumsa writes, with reference to Origen and Alexandria, of the 'myth of multiculturalism'; Jewish Hellenism might appear to attest the peaceful coexistence of cultures, but it is manifest alongside a hatred for Jews which, by Origen's time, has been transmitted to Christians.[27] A reviewer of *Origen and the Jews* already asked whether the book's emphasis on Origen's own courtesy might veil the strength of Christian hostility towards Jews.[28]

Origen and the Jews certainly underlines Origen's moderation in speaking of Judaism, but it also notes the 'ill-informed rancour' of much early Christian writing on this subject, and the powerful antagonisms of Jews and Christians.[29] Similarly, the book highlights rabbinic participation in Greek speech and culture, but it hardly slips into a sentimental view of the Roman Empire and Jewish attitudes towards it. Caesarea, the home of a flourishing Jewish community in Origen's time, is also presented as a place 'viewed with a certain distaste by the rabbis'; for it was the seat of Roman rule, the source of harsh edicts, and the scene of imprisonments and executions after Bar Kokhba's uprising.[30]

Discussion of Marcel Simon has focused on his view of Jews in the second- and third-century Roman Empire as forming a community of great strength and considerable prosperity, which especially in the diaspora vied with the growing Christian body in a shared setting of Greek culture; their conflict ended in favour of the church when imperial rule became Christian. In Simon's reconstruction, friction was exacerbated by competition for gentile adherents, in which Christian mission was matched by Jewish proselytism. Rivalry ending in the triumph of the church is affirmed in Simon-like fashion in *Origen and the Jews*, but without discussion of proselytism.[31] Yet dissent from the view of a flourishing Judaism in the Roman Empire was voiced in Y. F. Baer's argument that third-century Jews suffered Roman persecution; this view, as Simon noted, goes against the grain of evidence linking such persecution with repression of revolt, but Baer has been saluted by Seth Schwartz for recognizing the inassimilable character of professing Jews under Roman rule.[32] It

[25] Schwartz 2001, 162–3, 182; Schwartz 2007, 85. [26] Schwartz, 2010, 5–7.
[27] Stroumsa 2003, 24–9. [28] Hayman (n. 1, above).
[29] de Lange 1976, 76, 135. [30] de Lange 1976, 10–11. [31] de Lange 1976, 114–15.
[32] Baer 1961, discussed by Simon 1986, 'Postscript', 402–6; Schwartz 2010, 182.

was asked too if Simon's picture of Jewish communal life did not exaggerate the importance of proselytism.[33] More generally, did he put too much faith in Christian depictions of Jewish life and thought? Did he underrate the extent to which argument against Judaism was simply inherent in the Christian tradition of biblical exegesis?[34] He was also criticized for retaining some echo of W. Bousset's strictures on rigidity in rabbinic teachings.[35] His interest in the Jewish and Christian share in Greek language and culture seems not, however, to be reflected in these questionings.

Further discussion has recognized the importance in the Church of tradition-bound expressions of anti-Judaism, but has still allowed validity to Simon's picture of a flourishing Judaism with a Christian rival.[36] It has not brought to the fore, however, some arguably positive elements of Simon's debt to Bousset which are taken up in *Origen and the Jews*, notably Simon's stress on Hellenistic Judaism, Jewish diversity and the continuation of Jewish writing in Greek.[37]

On the other hand, at the centre of debate has been the question of the interpretation of ancient Christian perceptions of the Jews, given the probable influence of preconceived images current in the church.[38] In this connection *Origen and the Jews* has been cited as an example of the assumption – unjustified, it is urged – that Christian texts on Judaism, when historically interpreted, can shed light on the Judaism of their time, including Jewish self-perceptions.[39] The charge hardly suits the discernment with which Christian texts are treated in the book. Perhaps the best answer to it, however, is the pragmatic one that Christian sources, when compared discriminatingly with rabbinic texts, do on occasion suggest some measure of Jewish knowledge on the Christian side. Instances have been noted from the nineteenth-century *Wissenschaft des Judentums* onwards, and the process is continued with critical care in *Origen and the Jews*.

[33] Doubts on the importance of proselytism were prominent in early criticism of Simon, as noted by Simon 1986, 'Postscript', 390–3.

[34] The theological aspect of early Christian comment on Judaism was brought out in connection with Simon, but without dismissal of the historical witness of the texts to Jewish communal life, by Lieu 2002. All the questions just noted were raised together by Taylor 1995.

[35] Baumgarten 1999.

[36] See consideration of Taylor's critique by Blanchetière 1995; Stroumsa 1996, 11, 14–15; Carleton Paget 2010b; Baumgarten 1999.

[37] These points are not mentioned in the critique of Simon's debt to Bousset on rabbinic teaching in Baumgarten 1999.

[38] Lieu 1996, continuing, e.g., at 234 and n. 129 (on Melito and M. Taylor), her affirmation that the importance of 'image' does not preclude reflections of 'contemporary reality'.

[39] Taylor 1995, 88.

III

To return now to the book itself, the breadth of the Jewish–Greek tradition which it presents can be illustrated in conclusion. Against the background of Lieberman's rabbinic Greek studies Nicholas de Lange argued that, through the Greek language and his Jewish contacts, Origen could have had access to a great range of Jewish writings and traditions, from biblical texts and interpretations to rabbinic halakhic teaching of the kind preserved in Hebrew in the Mishnah.[40] A famous instance is the explanation which he elicited of the custom of dedicating money referred to in Matt. 15:5, Mark 7:11 ('it is Corban'); 'we should not have comprehended it', he says, 'if one of the Hebrews had not expounded to us the subject-matter.'[41] He would have been familiar too with Jewish prayer in Greek.[42] His work also preserves, especially through debate with Celsus, allusions to the Logos-theology and angelology of Jewish Hellenism; Origen stresses against Celsus that Jews known to him think differently, but elsewhere himself accepts a tradition of a Christian-Jewish teaching that the two seraphim of Isaiah's temple-vision are the Son and the Spirit.[43]

This function of Greek as a *trait d'union* between third-century Christians and Jewish learning and piety, including that of the Rabbis, can perhaps still be overlooked, given the centrality in later Jewish life of the rabbinic literature in Hebrew and Aramaic.[44] It is a vital element in the closeness of the co-existence of church and synagogue depicted by Simon.

To begin at the Mishnaic end of this range of Jewish–Greek tradition, *Origen and the Jews* shows that through Origen we have early attestations of Greek corresponding to specialized Hebrew terms used in rabbinic literature. Particularly notable are σοφός (*hakham*) used as a title, and δευτέρωσις (corresponding to Mishnah perhaps especially in the broad sense of tradition as a whole).[45] A comparable phrase is later quoted in Greek by Jerome (*Epist.* 121.10), writing in Latin about contemporary

[40] de Lange 1976, 22. [41] de Lange 1976, 41 (Origen, *Comm. in Matt.* XI.9, on Matt. 15:5).

[42] de Lange 1976, 11, 51.

[43] de Lange 1976, 41–3, 69, 101; 171, n. 37 (*Orig. Princ.* 1.3, 4; 4.3, 14, on Isa. 6: 1–3).

[44] Thus the linguistic situation of Jews and Christians was not prominent in the justified depiction of a 'Jewish life of the Logos' at the time of the rabbinic movement in Boyarin 2004, 31–2, 112–27. Language is important, by contrast, when the place of the later Greek versions in vigorous Jewish communal life in the high Roman Empire is reaffirmed by Rajak, 2009, 309–12, but with primary emphasis on the diaspora and relation with pagans, although Christians and Palestine are also mentioned.

[45] de Lange 1976, 34–5; on δευτέρωσις, Bacher 1965, I: 23; Horbury 2010, 6–10.

Jewish *sophoi*: 'when they expound their traditions to their disciples they are accustomed to say, *hoi sophoi deuterousin*, that is, "the Wise are teaching traditions".' The words in Origen are important not only as external attestations of rabbinic vocabulary, but also as signs that a Greek counterpart of this specialized Hebrew vocabulary had, by the early third century, already been developed by Jews. Corresponding Aramaic terms are well known through the Aramaic of the Talmud and midrash, but Aramaic counterparts were not the only ones. Origen may here indicate part of the background of the saying ascribed to R. Judah ha-Nasi: 'In the land of Israel, why use the Syrian tongue? Use the holy tongue, or the Greek tongue.'[46] Greek could mediate rabbinic teaching.

Yet, to pass to biblical study, Origen's witness suggests that here too Jews used specialized Greek terms related to Hebrew vocabulary. This biblical area has perhaps received less emphasis in general discussion of Jewish–Greek tradition at this period. *Origen and the Jews*, however, opens a view into Jewish–Greek biblical scholarship, translation and interpretation in and before Origen's time, and the Church's dependence on it. Origen's textual and exegetical labours, including the heroic achievement of the Hexapla, then appear as, to a considerable extent, mediations and developments of Greek–Jewish learning.

Thus Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion and other Greek–Jewish versions, attesting the variety of current textual and interpretative tradition, are replaced in *Origen and the Jews* within the lively Greek–Jewish biblical culture also attested by the Naḥal Ḥever Dodecapropheton.[47] The multiplicity of Greek biblical translations is the background of the choice of words from the Psalms with which R. Eliezer and R. Joshua are said to have congratulated Aquila: *yophyaphitha mi-bene adham*, 'you have Japhetized – Graecized – more handsomely than anyone.'[48] The transliteration of Hebrew into Greek represented in the second column of the Hexapla is comparably judged to reflect use of such transliterated texts to facilitate the reading of Hebrew by Greek-speaking Jews whose knowledge of Hebrew was poor.[49]

To move away from the Hexapla, the discussion of the select library or canon of biblical books, itself a Jewish development of a Greek approach to good literature, is shown through Origen to have its own Greek vocabulary,

[46] *b. Soṭah* 49b, *b. B. Qam.* 83a. [47] de Lange 1976, 51, 58–9.

[48] *y. Meg.* 1:11, 71c, where the quotation of Ps. 45:3 presupposes the assonant Gen. 9:27 'God enlarge Japhet (*yapht 'elohim le-yapheth*), and may he dwell in the tents of Shem' (the epigraph of *BJGS*); see Lieberman 1965, 17–18; Harl in Harl and de Lange 1983, 261–8.

[49] de Lange 1976, 57–8.

in touch with Hebrew. Among the Greek fragments of his commentary on Psalm 1 is his statement that 'the testament-books, as the Hebrews hand down, number twenty-two, like the letters of their alphabet'; later on he gives a list of these books 'according to the Hebrews', with transliterated Hebrew titles, ending with: 'outside these are the Maccabees'.[50] Here, as Nicholas de Lange notes, Origen is quoting a Jewish tradition about the number of the books, which will have come to him through Greek but presupposes mystical interpretation of the Hebrew alphabet.[51] Then the adjective ἐνδιάθηκος applied to the twenty-two books, signifying 'within the testament' or 'within the covenant', seems to be a Jewish–Greek term related to originally Hebrew-language description of biblical texts as 'book of the covenant' (Sir. 24:23, 1 Macc. 1:56–7).[52] It may be noted too that 'outside', used with regard to the Maccabees, recalls the Mishnaic phrase 'outside books', one rabbinic interpretation of which understands them as books like ben Sira – 'outside' the accepted number of biblical books, but associated with them.[53]

In the field of interpretative theory, Origen's affirmation of the value of each word and letter of the biblical text is compared by Nicholas de Lange with the type of exegesis associated with R. Akiba. Both will draw on earlier Greek exegetical practice, but it is stressed that rabbinic exegesis of this kind can have been known to Origen through both his study of Aquila and his access to rabbinic exegetical traditions current in Greek. An excerpt from Origen's commentary on Psalm 1 on the inspiration of scripture down to the least iota, in parallel with the operation of divine providence in every detail of creation, is indeed placed in the Philokalia just after an earlier excerpt, giving a hermeneutical simile expressly ascribed to a Jewish teacher. Here scripture is like a house in which the rooms are locked and the keys are present but misplaced; the interpreter, by going to other parts of scripture, finds the key to the passage which concerns him.[54]

In this connection, then, *Origen and the Jews* presents three elements of Greek–Jewish biblical interpretation: exegeses in the style of R. Akiba

[50] The initial statement is quoted from Origen in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25, 1, but appears with fuller context in an excerpt in Philokalia 3; the list is found only in a further quotation in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25, 2. See de Lange 1976, 52–3; Harl in Harl and de Lange 1983, 265 n. 3.

[51] de Lange 1976, 52, 175 n. 24; Harl in Harl and de Lange 1983, 1–20; and 264 n. 2.

[52] The background of ἐνδιάθηκος is not discussed when its use is noted in de Lange 1976, 52; but Harl in Harl and de Lange 1983, 1–20 and 265 n. 3, says that the adjective seems to take up Jewish usage, although this is not known definitely (see n. 7, above, on her joint reading of Philokalia 1–20 with Nicholas de Lange). Lampe 1961–8, 468a renders '*covenantal*, hence of scriptures *canonical*', citing Origen and Eusebius only.

[53] *m. Sanh*. 10:1; *y. Sanh*. 10:1, 28a; *b. Sanh*. 100b.

[54] Philokalia 2.3–4; de Lange, 1976, 110–11; Harl in Harl and de Lange 1983, 244–6, 250–9.

current in Greek as well as Hebrew, the Greek version of Aquila which can be linked with this style of interpretation, and a Greek statement of interpretative theory, on the obscurities of scripture, which Origen says was transmitted to him by 'the Hebrew', a Jew inside or outside the Christian community.

One further instrument of scriptural study in the Greek–Jewish tradition noted here, beside the canon-list, was a handbook on etymologies of biblical names, attributed by Jerome to Philo. Origen, it is shown by scrutiny of instances, amplified knowledge he gained from this source by interpretations, also transmitted through Greek, from the intensive contemporary rabbinic exegesis of names.[55]

Origen and the Jews thus presents Jewish Greek and Jewish Hellenism through the medium of a single great Greek Christian writer in post-Severan Palestine. Origen is studied with the blend of *akribeia* and attachment associated with the humanist tradition. Detailed inquiry is summed up and pursued with lucidity, depth and charm. A note querying Sir Ronald Syme on the Samaritans can gradually take up Syme's own liking for asyndeton, and the subject index includes, justly but pleasingly, 'hippogriffs, not kosher'.[56]

Something of this work's abiding significance for study of Jewish Greek and Jewish Hellenism can perhaps be focused in a final note of three aspects of the book. First, the range of Origen's interests permits a broad view of Greek–Jewish tradition. Rabbinic interpretation of scripture and the traditions of the *sophoi*, current in Greek, can be seen to join hands with the use of the Septuagint and the later Greek biblical translations, and of Greek instruments of biblical study, within an intellectual atmosphere which can be receptive to Hellenistic Jewish religious thought. Perhaps still no other book displays the concurrence of all these elements of Jewish Greek in the eastern Roman provinces.

Secondly, *Origen and the Jews* brings to the fore some documents of Jewish–Greek tradition current in the post-Severan empire, to set beside the revised Greek biblical translations and the probably Jewish texts preserved in the Clementine Homilies and the Apostolic Constitutions.[57] These documents include precious traces of specialized Greek terms which are in touch with Hebrew-language rabbinic and biblical study, and with them also a biblical canon-list, hermeneutical theorizing and interpretations of Hebrew names. The book brings this material together with the

[55] de Lange 1976, 16–17, 117–21. [56] de Lange 1976, 167, n. 104; 237. [57] See n. 18 above.

traces of Jewish–Greek speech and thought at this period gained from inscriptions and through rabbinic literature, but suggests likewise that there will always be more to do, not least in respect of ever-increasing epigraphic evidence, towards a profile of Jewish–Greek tradition in the high empire.

Thirdly, the fact that these perceptions are attained through Origen underlines the importance for our knowledge of Greek–Jewish tradition and Jewish Hellenism, of Christian preservation of Greek–Jewish literature and the readiness of some Christian biblical interpreters to sit at the feet of Gamaliel. The book does the service of presenting Jewish–Greek tradition expressly in the context of Jewish–Christian relations in the eastern Roman provinces, with a reminder that debate with Jews and inquiry from them could go hand in hand, and that Jewish–Christian relations were often relations between Christians and Jews who both spoke Greek.[58]

[58] It is a pleasure to offer these comments to Nicholas de Lange, in admiration and in grateful recollection of his friendship over many years.

CHAPTER 6

Jewish–Greek studies in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Germany
A brief overview

Giuseppe Veltri

The decline in Christian interest in the literary and philosophical traditions of Judaism and the growing attention accorded to Hellas and the Hellenistic 'spirit' have a curious and intriguing history in the modern era. Such changing attitudes have naturally also affected the (hi)story of Jewish–Greek studies. On the one hand Greek and Hellenistic culture experienced a revival both in Christianity and in Judaism, especially in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, the growing wave of anti-Judaism and then anti-Semitism led to more negative assessments of Jewish history. Christian interest in the nineteenth century focused on the Septuagint (and its stories), Philo and other aspects of Jewish antiquity of relevance to Christian scholarly and general interest, while only scant attention was paid to later Jewish literature or post-'biblical' Jewish–Greek studies. Yet, as I will try to show in this chapter, the field of Jewish–Greek studies had a hesitant but solid beginning in the nineteenth century, addressing most aspects of what currently interests scholars.

I shall begin by focusing on the turning point in Christian interest in Judaeo-Greek studies in the eighteenth to nineteenth century. I shall then examine work in this area conducted by the movement of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, ending with some suggestive conclusions.

The present chapter, then, does not aim at a comprehensive treatment of the topic – that would be impossible in the space allowed. Rather my intention is to introduce the reader to an important chapter in the modern history of the study of Judaism, drawing attention to areas in the historiography of the subject which have sometimes not received the attention they deserve.

Nicholas de Lange's contribution to Judaeo-Greek studies was and still is considerable. I have been very familiar with de Lange's work since I had the good fortune of getting to know him personally in the 1990s in Berlin. I admired his enthusiastic and spirited passion for Judaeo-Greek and Byzantine Judaism, an enthusiasm that also spurred my own research.

The 'decline' of Christian interest in Jewish studies and the revival in Hellenistic thought

To understand the developments in the study of Jewish and Jewish–Greek literature, we have to begin at the beginning, namely with Christian enthusiasm and commitment to 'esoteric' teachings within Judaism. This derives from interest in the Greek Alexandrian Jewish tradition. Belief in the *philosophia perennis* (the perennial philosophy)[1] accounts for Christian scholarly interest in Judaism before and after the advent of Christ, and is an indicator of more general developments in the history of philosophy, literature and scholarship.[2]

Interest in the Jewish (principally) mystical tradition sprang from the Christian desire to find new sources of that wisdom, thought to have been present at the creation of the world: the wisdom of Adam before his 'original' sin. Yet, over against the direct as well as indirect attacks on the validity of religions in the early modern period, arising from new scientific discoveries and the related development of sceptical and empirical philosophy, Christian scholarship developed an old–new genealogy of knowledge. It claimed to go back to Adam and the primeval tradition of the perfect science in Paradise. Their claim was simple: if philosophy as love for wisdom is the main outcome of Mosaic revelation, one should infer that Greek philosophy is either plagiarized or that the Greek philosophers had met with Jewish prophets. In this manner, ancient claims that the Greeks plagiarized the Greek Torah via Alexandria or through the alleged meeting of Pythagoras with Daniel and Ezekiel in Egypt were given contemporary and scholarly support.

The questioning of such legends is a particular feature of eighteenth- and especially nineteenth-century research. As early as 1702, Johann Jacob Borsch wrote a *Dissertatio historica de peregrinationibus Pythagorae* ('Historical dissertation on the wanderings of Pythagoras'), under the direction of the Pietist professor Johannes Franz Buddeus, who also played a leading role in discussions on this matter. Both the student and his professor attacked the position of the French scholar Pierre-Daniel Huet, who, in his *Demonstratio evangelica* (1679), had strongly defended the idea of the Mosaic origins of philosophy. Borsch and Buddeus rejected the idea that Pythagoras had been a student of the prophets Daniel or Ezekiel. The actual travels of Pythagoras, they argued, had taken him to

[1] On the concept, see Schmidt-Biggemann 2004; Veltri 2009a, 25–7.

[2] For all aspects concerned with this topic, see Veltri 2009a, 11–38.

both Egypt and Babylonia, thus expanding his philosophical horizons. They did not, however, enable him to master Jewish philosophy. A similar position had already been taken two years earlier by Daniel Bandeco, a student from Berlin, who in 1700 defended his thesis, *Pythagoras utrum fuerit Judaeus, Monachusve Carmelita* ('Whether Pythagoras was a Jew or a Carmelite monk') under the direction of Johann Friedrich Mayer in Hamburg. Mayer and Bandeco thoroughly examined the ancient belief that Pythagoras had been a student of Daniel or Ezekiel, and concluded that, despite some similarities between Hebrew and Pythagorean thought, there was no evidence of a direct relationship.

The Pietist and eclectic professor Johann Franz Budde, and his school, were the first to criticize the theology of 'archaic man' (*Adam ha-qadmon*) and of Christian philosophical Kabbalah through historical research, in his *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum*. Already from the start of the book, Budde addresses the premise that there are different uses for the word 'philosophy'. He employs the term in the same meaning as that used by those authors he is discussing, namely 'study and love of wisdom' (*sapientiae studium atque amor*).[3] From the time of Budde we have a history of Jewish philosophy, but no longer any acceptance of the idea of the Jewish foundation of philosophy in its entirety.

Contemporary with the historically sceptical investigation of the old Jewish–Greek philosophical tradition, we have a parallel shift and interest in Greek language and culture away from that associated with Hebrew and Aramaic. The study of 'Oriental' languages and cultures (also with deep roots in Halle, Leipzig and Jena) gradually came to be associated more with what we might term secular literary studies rather than the missionary and Christian assumptions which had been so prevalent in the most prominent school of Pietism. Greek culture was now praised for having universalized Christianity, and Judaism played no further role in the process of the development of wisdom and knowledge, as claimed by the supporters of the theory of a *philosophia perennis*. Gerhard Kittel (1888–1948) founded the influential *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (*Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*). There he posited the hypothesis of the antinomy between Athens and Jerusalem, as well as between logos and myth.[4] What were the origins of this tendency, which spread so rapidly?

[3] Buddeus 1720, 2.
[4] See Barr 1961, where he addresses the ideological starting points of Kittel's dictionary.

Key to the development of the human being in the Enlightenment and to the history of humanity is the literature of a people, and not its ancestry, or the philosophical and religious adaptation of knowledge. Summarizing these views, the founding father of philological studies of ancient cultures, Frederick August Wolf (1759–1824), writes:

> before the Greeks we have not witnessed one nation, and beside them no Oriental one, that had known the art of oratory. This was rooted in the fact they had not been allowed to address important issues. That is also the reason that the Oriental peoples did not have prose. They had never succeeded in the felicitous connection of sentences in a paragraph, which lies at the core of the art of writing.[5]

The superiority of the Greeks is not based on their inspiration, but on an aesthetic dimension, their literature and 'beautiful art'. Wolf is aware that this concept finds agreement among Jews as well: from the time of the Alexandrian Library to his students in Berlin, Isaak Markus Jost and Leopold Zunz. Within the Palestinian Talmud, for example, we read that the Greek language was suitable for poetry and songs, while Hebrew was only for everyday life, Latin for the empire, and Aramaic for mourning (*y. Soṭ.* 7:2, 30a).

The fact that Jewish literature was not considered a primary topic of study for Christian scholarship was not something odd. The exception, however, was Jewish Hellenistic literature and philosophy, most clearly manifested in the Septuagint and Philo of Alexandria. This is exemplified by the Halle theologian August Ferdinand Dähne (1807–1893) in his historical introduction to the *Jewish Hellenistic Philosophy of Religion* (1834). Dähne still considered Jewish Alexandrian philosophy as the *praeparatio Evangelica*, a preparation for the Gospel; and this point was given more general expression by Johann Gustav Droysen in his *Geschichte des Hellenismus* (1836–43), in which the cultural and religious character of the Hellenistic world was emphasized, and a providential importance attributed to it as the fundamental influence behind the formation of Christianity. In this account, under the influence of August Gfrörer (on whom see below), Droysen attributed considerable importance to Hellenistic Judaism. Christian scholarship in the nineteenth century understood itself as a scion of Hellenistic culture, as an inheritor of the doctrine of the logos against Jewish ritual and legalism.[6] An example of this is the earlier works of the theologian and pupil of F. C. Baur, August

[5] Wolf 1831, I: 33. [6] On this, see Veltri 2009a, *passim* and Veltri 2013, *passim*.

F. Gfrörer, who eventually became a Roman Catholic, indicating that such interests extended beyond exclusively Protestant circles. In his study on Philo (*Philo und die alexandrinische Theosophie*, 1831)[7] he stressed the Alexandrian background of Palestinian Judaism imported into the Holy Land first by primitive Christianity. In this thesis, then, Christianity brings about the Hellenization of Judaism, even in Palestine.[8]

The consequence of such an approach was academic concentration on the Hellenistic period as the birth of Christianity, and stubborn ignorance of all that Judaism produced after the event of Jesus Christ (with some exceptions). Reflecting on this situation, Leopold Zunz stated in 1848:

> And still! How great is the need for a chair for Jewish literature at our universities! The ignorance is tremendous, the prejudice, the injustice in everything connected with the Jews' social and historical existence: science, well-being, harmony, and morality, do not gain from the fact that the educated Jew and his achievements are rejected in a way replete with contempt, devoid of love, and marked by truly condescending patrician attitudes.[9]

The Prussian government rejected the proposal on the grounds that,

> a professorship established with the secondary object which is also committed to the intellectual preservation and strengthening of the Jewish nature in all its special features, contradicts the idea of the new freedom dedicated to eradicating the previously rigid differences. It would be providing an advantage to the Jews, an abuse of the university … which principally has no other criterion for its disciplines but the internal content of science, and in which … no external practicability should supplant the more pure scholarly-scientific interest.[10]

The commission highlighted the fact that there did not even exist a chair for German or Prussian history: 'For that reason it is not advisable forcibly to remove Jewish history from the scholarly nexus of general history.' Ultimately, the argument ran, there was also no chair at the university in Berlin for Catholic theology and history. It was not possible to concede to the Jews what had been rejected to the Catholics. Moreover, in the Jewish academy, the study of Judaeo-Greek culture had primarily been mastered by independent scholars.

[7] The work on Philo was preparatory to his *Kritische Geschichte des Urchristenthums* (5 vols. Stuttgart, 1838).

[8] See Gfrörer 1831, xxxvii.

[9] Geiger 1916, 258–9; English translation in Veltri 2013, 90.

[10] Veltri 2013, 90.

The beginning of Judaeo-Greek studies and the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*

Given the extent of the research that was still needed on Hebrew and Aramaic literature, Jewish philosophi(es), history, archaeology, philology and so on, it is understandable that Jewish–Greek studies were not viewed as a high priority in the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. In Zunz's seminal treatise 'Notes on Rabbinic Literature' ('*Etwas über die rabbinische Litteratur*'), published in 1818,[11] little attention was paid to the Judaeo-Greek heritage. Zunz only refers to the ancient legal tradition which should be compared with the Graeco-Roman law system.[12] Nevertheless, Jewish–Greek studies become an interesting field of research, originating in theological seminaries and as the private research focus of a number of scholars. Consequently, we should speak of this period as the real beginning of Jewish–Greek studies. In what follows, attention will be focused on classic studies, such as Zacharias Frankel and Samuel Krauss's epoch-defining works on Jewish-Hellenistic (Septuagint) literature and Byzantine Jewish history.[13] Furthermore, little-known articles published in journals and proceedings will provide a more detailed and intriguing look into the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The Greek translation of the Bible had become a focus of special interest since the beginning of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. It constitutes a little-known example of just how strong the interest was in a translation which was considered Christian owing to its use in the New Testament and its serving as the philological basis for the developing doctrine of the Church Fathers.[14] Yet *Jewish* scholarly interest was mainly determined by the tradition of exegesis found therein, with focus on the text of the Septuagint and its parallels in targum and midrash. Notable are the contributions of Avraham Geiger and Zacharias Frankel on the liturgical (targumic) use of the Septuagint, rejected by Avraham Berliner.[15] Zacharias Frankel occupies a special place in our reappraisal. Born in 1801 in Prague, he died in Breslau in 1875. Frankel's life can be firmly located in the first phase of the new 'scientific' approach to Jewish literature and history, and

[11] Zunz 1818: see Wallach 1952 and Veltri 2013.

[12] Zunz 1818, 10. In later works (Zunz 1845, for example), he mentions the importance of Greek literature and in his seminal works on sermons and poetry he deals with the Byzantine world.

[13] See Krauss 1914.

[14] See the second volume of the *Monatsschrift* from 1853 and especially the article by Graetz 1853.

[15] To avoid overburdening this chapter with too many bibliographic entries, I refer to Veltri 1994, 8–11, and the bibliographic references quoted there.

at the same time – parallel to and independent from it – he became preoccupied with the question of the so-called *Reformjudentum.* Against the tendency in Reform Judaism more or less to reject the historicity of some Jewish traditions, he showed particular interest in that area by attempting to develop methods for dating rabbinic traditions. Through analysis of the parallels between the rabbinic sources and the Septuagint, the age of the tradition itself could be inferred. At the same time, the similarities between rabbinic and Septuagintal exegesis were also a valid argument against the Christianizing view of this translation. Two of Frankel's books are important in this regard: his *Vorstudien zur Septuaginta* (1841) and, ten years later, *Über den Einfluss der palästinensischen Exegese auf die alexandrinische Hermeneutik* (1851). In the first he refers to the works of the Mantuan Renaissance Jewish scholar Azaria de' Rossi and his criticism that sought a 'scientific approach to Judaism' ('wissenschaftliche Behandlung des Judentums').[16] Azaria was the 'father' of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, as Cecil Roth used to call him, and also the founder of Graeco-Jewish studies. The *Vorstudien* consists of a chapter on the origin and age of the Septuagint as recorded in Graeco-Hellenistic literature, the rabbinic tradition, the influence of the targum on the Septuagint, and its non-canonical place in Jewish tradition; the second chapter is an analysis of the *critica textus* of the Septuagint; the following chapter is devoted to the problem of the pronunciation of Hebrew in Alexandria, as well as to grammar and hermeneutics. In his second book, *Über den Einfluss*, Frankel broke new ground in attempting to identify the influence of rabbinic tradition on the Septuagint, a thesis emerging from the conviction that the so-called 'errors', the variant readings, the special interpretations of the Greek translation, did not arise from a different Hebrew *Urtext*, but from an exegetical tradition.

In 1845 Graetz, on the invitation of Frankel, wrote his essay 'Die Septuaginta im Talmud' for the *Zeitschrift für die religiösen Interessen des Judentums* (2, 1845, 429–37). The article anticipates Graetz's later contribution to the topic, the discrepancy between Christian theology in the New Testament and patristic literature, on the one hand, and the text of the Septuagint on the other. As far as I know, he is the first to emphasize the historical importance of the reaction of Jerome to the variant readings in rabbinic literature. According to Jerome, they are intended in the Greek translation to avoid polytheistic and anthropomorphic interpretations of the Torah. Frankel's emphasis on rabbinic interpretation and his interest

[16] Frankel 1851, xi.

in tracing ideas in the Talmud back to the Septuagint presented an alternative view to the traditional social interpretation of the translation. The traditional view of the phenomenon of the Septuagint as a translation for and on the initiative of the king Ptolemy was a thesis that went against the interpretation of Frankel. He saw the Septuagint as a product of Jewish interpretation and one that, like the targum, was a product of the synagogue for the synagogue. Nevertheless, as de Lange has shown, Frankel showed no interest in its role within Greek-speaking Judaism; only in its place within rabbinic tradition.[17]

From this it is clear why Frankel and Graetz[18] should be considered as pioneers in the history of the interpretation of the Septuagint. Yet, in addition, we have a large number of Jewish scholars who were interested in this Greek translation. Little known are the study of Isidor Scheftelowitz on Esther (Masoretic Text, LXX), and the contribution of Alexander Sperber on the Greek Book of Ruth.[19] The scholarly occupation with Hellenism and Hellenistic culture is a recurrent topos in the work of Jacob Freudenthal, Carl Siegfried[20] and, of course, Isaak Heinemann.[21] Important to note is the edition and German translation of Philo of Alexandria.[22] It was supervised by Leopold Cohn and Paul Wendland as editors, who completed the edition in 1930, and Leopold Cohn and Isaak Heinemann oversaw the German translation, and completed that in 1938.

An important field of research, connected with attempts to date rabbinic literature, concerns the (Latin and) Greek loan-words in the Talmud and midrash. Observations upon them were not new in the field. They had already been recorded in the lexicon of Nathan b. Yehiel in the eleventh century, and some were now listed by Alexander Kohut (1878).[23] Since the middle of the eighteenth century there had been an increasing interest in the subject, beginning with Frankel's analysis of some words in the Jerusalem Talmud, and Julius Fürst on the Talmud and midrash, and including the volumes by Samuel Krauss, now the standard work in the field,[24] and the contribution of Immanuel Löw as editor for Krauss.[25]

[17] De Lange 2013b, 150–1.
[18] See Graetz 1872 on the sons of Tobias, the Hellenists and ben Sira.
[19] See Scheftelowitz 1903 and Sperber 1937.
[20] Siegfried 1900 on Hellenism and diaspora Judaism.
[21] Heinemann 1932a and 1932b, for example.
[22] Philo 1896–1948 and Philo 1909–38.
[23] Kohut 1878, list at p. vii.
[24] See Frankel 1866; Fürst 1894; Krauss 1893 and Krauss 1898–9.
[25] See Löw 1936.

Krauss merits further discussion. A Hungarian by birth, and eventually dying in Cambridge in 1948, he belonged to the second generation of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. It was a generation mostly concerned with topics other than biblical criticism, especially the *realia* of Talmud and midrash. His impact on modern scholarship is immense. His dissertation (1893) dealt with Greek and Latin lexicography derived from Jewish sources, a topic which he furthered some years later in his *Griechische und Lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch, und Targum* (2 vols., 1898–9). He also authored the first and still unparalleled analysis of *realia* in the Talmud and midrash, published under the impressionistic title *Talmudische Archäologie*, that is an investigation into the everyday life of the Rabbis in their Graeco-Roman environment. His work on the *realia* is not the only one of its kind. At the beginning of the twentieth century, we have the monumental work of Leopold Löw, who was also involved in Krauss's lexicographic work, and whose notable publications include *Flora der Juden* (4 vols., 1924–34), an encyclopaedic work of almost all of the plant names and their cultural history in the Bible and rabbinic literature, with numerous parallel traditions cited from the Graeco-Roman and Islamic world, and beyond.

One of the major achievements of that generation was to shape the study of botany, zoology, medicine, agronomy and so on. Apparent from such studies is the realization of the extent to which Jewish teachers and writings on these subjects reflected knowledge current in the Graeco-Roman world of the time. Immanuel Löw's *Flora der Juden*, Ludwig Lewysohn's *Die Zoologie des Talmuds*, Julius Preuss's *Biblisch-talmudische Medizin*, and other works, among them the material collected by Saul Lieberman and Daniel Sperber, clearly demonstrate in fine detail the proximity of the Rabbis to Graeco-Roman ideas and knowledge.[26] The list of *realia* can doubtless be extended to such areas as the culture of bathing, theatre and so on, revealing a spectrum of 'influences' or as I prefer to denote it, the humus in which rabbinic Judaism developed.[27]

Related to this area of scholarship is the study of magic. The first modern treatise on Jewish magic was written in 1850 by Gideon Brecher, a physician in Prossnitz (Prostějov), Moravia, who viewed magic as

[26] See Löw 1924–34; Lewysohn 1858; Preuss 1911; Bergel 1880; Sperber 1991.

[27] The Hellenistic influence on constructions and building as well as on social behaviour and custom – for instance, *symposia*, *ludi* – is not proof of rabbinic acceptance of the theoretical system therein. It is rather a reference to their practical-pragmatic attitude. We have neither evidence that the Rabbis attributed any theoretical value, for example, to the mosaics of the synagogue building of Naaran, Beth Alpha, Tiberias and Husifa, nor a tractate, a text or at least a tradition about the cultural implications of bathing or the symposia.

an incidental phenomenon in Judaism, adopted from the non-Jewish (Graeco-Roman) world during the biblical and rabbinic periods. A similar approach was taken by Rabbi David Heymann Joël (1815–1882), who collected rabbinic legal and narrative sources on the topic. His book (published in 1883) aimed to prove that biblical and Tannaitic sources (rabbinic sources of the first two centuries CE) were free from magical beliefs and practices. In addition, some detailed studies on particular aspects of rabbinic folklore appeared at that time. Particular mention should be made of the works of Max Grünbaum in 1877 and Israel Lewy in 1878, who drew parallels between Jewish magic and the Graeco-Roman world.

In similar fashion to the topic of Hellenistic lexicography, cultural history and *realia* raised the issue of the social position of Jews within the Graeco-Roman world. A key question extending across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries concerned the merits or deficiencies of Greek culture.[28] This issue focuses on how far one can view Greek culture around the Mediterranean world as in some way excellent. Distinguished experts in this field were Beer Berhard, Moritz Güdemann, Israel Lewy and Markus Jastrow, who took a keen interest in the relationship of myth and aggada,[29] followed by the great works of Louis Ginzberg and Edmund Stein, the student of Leo Baeck, and Julius Guttmann in Berlin,[30] as well as the work of Avigdor Atpovitzer.[31] Also important is the work of Lajos (Ludwig) Blau on the papyri, similarly concerned with comparisons with Talmudic documents.[32]

Reference should also be made in this context to the work of Louis Ginzberg on the Church Fathers and aggada,[33] completed before he undertook his monumental study of the legends of the Jews,[34] work which Nicholas de Lange, many years later, was to develop further in his dissertation on Origen and the Jews.[35]

The study of the Judaeo-Greek heritage is not restricted to the ancient period. The novelty of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* also consists in its

[28] Richter 1806; Bergmann 1917; Heinemann 1932b.
[29] Güdemann 1875 and Güdemann 1876 (myth and aggada); Lewy 1878; Jastrow 1881 (against an attribution of a Greek text in the *Song Rab*. 2:15).
[30] Ginzberg 1909–18; Stein 1934.
[31] For example, see Aptovitzer 1925.
[32] See Blau 1912 and Blau 1919.
[33] Ginzberg 1898 and Ginzberg 1899.
[34] Ginzberg 1909–28.
[35] See de Lange 1976. Knowledge of Christian texts in rabbinic literature remains to date a not fully exhausted research field. See Veltri 2006 and especially Veltri 2009b on the possible relationship of *b. Meg.* 9a from the Church Father Epiphanius.

interest in investigating modern Jewish–Greek history. Fascinating studies appeared on the origin and development of the New Greek idiom in comparison with Modern Hebrew.[36] This should not be viewed as a contribution to contemporary Hebrew studies but as an exploration into the relationship between Greek and Modern Hebrew, from the Middle Ages up to modern times.

The topic of modern Judaism and Greece is an innovation in research that has been insufficiently emphasized or scarcely even acknowledged. Insofar as interest was expressed in these matters in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was to be found in Zionist publications like the weekly *Die Welt*, founded by Theodor Herzl in 1897. Topics which loomed large included the protests by Jews in Greece, recorded conflicts, the Graeco-Turkish war and the peace accords, as well as Zionism in the eyes of Greeks.[37]

The interest in modern Greece and Judaism was not only shaped by Zionist perspectives but also such topics as an interest in Shabbatai Ẓevi (as in the analysis of Jakob Wassermann's novel *Die Juden von Zirndorf* [1897]),[38] or in a short notice on the Italian and Greek versions of the synagogue liturgy.[39]

Postlegomena

The Christian interest in Judaeo-Greek studies in the nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth century was limited to research chiefly on the Greek Old Testament, Hellenistic literature and the New Testament, combined with some interest in the rabbinic period (Emil Schürer, Paul Billerbeck). This interest in the Rabbis was largely concerned with the elucidation of the New Testament and its setting. By contrast, research by scholars associated with the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* embraced almost all aspects of Judaeo-Greek studies, from the Greek Bible, the Hellenistic period, the New Testament, and the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine periods, extending through the Middle Ages into the early modern and contemporary periods. In such study, the Greek tradition within Judaism, not just as this manifested itself in antiquity but up to the modern period too, retains a central and vital place of importance. Given the honorand's

[36] Wiener 1853, 317–20 (this is the final section of a longer essay that I have been unable to find in its entirety).
[37] See Anonymous 1897; Anonymous 1899; Brandes 1900.
[38] Anonymous 1923.
[39] Zoller and Brann 1918.

persistent, ongoing and heroic concern with the study of the Greek tradition within Judaism, in *all* periods of its history, he can be seen as the inheritor of the mantle of Jewish–Greek study so effectively espoused by members of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement.[40]

[40] In addition to the items cited here, numerous bibliographic entries of general interest to the reader can be found in Veltri 1994 (for the Septuagint), Veltri 1997 (for aggada) and Veltri 2006 (for translation theories and legends).

PART III

Greek Bible and language

CHAPTER 7

The origins of the Septuagint

James Carleton Paget

The subject of the origins of the Septuagint has elicited much discussion but few assured results. Many scholars think that the decision to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek was momentous in its consequences, and probably an unprecedented undertaking in the ancient world,[1] although there is a real possibility that under Persian rule Jews had already translated texts into Aramaic.[2] Recognition of the significance of the appearance of the Septuagint for the history of Judaism and the formation of Jewish identity in the diaspora[3] makes the need to investigate its origins perennial.[4]

What do scholars generally agree upon in the study of this subject? First, that when we talk about the origins of the Septuagint we are referring to the origins of the translation of the Pentateuch alone. The reasons for the translation of that set of books were probably different from that of other books.[5] Second, most scholars are clear that this translation took place sometime in the third century BCE.[6] Third, the translation was probably

[1] See amongst others Brock 1972; and Fernández Marcos 2000, 18, who speaks of 'an event without precedence in the ancient world'.

[2] Rajak 2009, 152, nn. 86 and 88, affirms bilingualism as a part of the background to the translation of the LXX but fails to mention the possibility of earlier Aramaic biblical translations, even though it was the main Jewish vernacular in Egypt in the Persian period. Compare the evidence of translation, though not in an Egyptian setting, in the book of Nehemiah (especially Neh. 8:7–8). My thanks to Professor William Horbury for suggestions here.

[3] See Bickerman 1988, 101, who describes the Septuagint as 'the most important translation ever made'.

[4] See van der Kooij 1999; Dorival 2001; Orth 2001; Honigman 2003, 93–144; Dines 2004, 27–62; Joosten 2006; Pietersma 2002; Wright 2008; Rajak 2009, 24–91.

[5] See Dines 2004, 45–6.

[6] Most agree that the language fits such a period, and the date accords with the existence of the earliest papyrus of the LXX (P.Rylands 458) from the mid-second century. For Demetrius the Chronographer's use of the LXX in the late third century, see Fraser 1972, I: 690–4; and for the use of the LXX Pentateuch in Isaiah and Psalms, see Schürer 1986, 476 ('Translations of the Canonical Bible'). For a later date see Clancy 2002.

the product of Egyptian Jewry, and, more specifically, Alexandrian Jewry.[7] Beyond this, a consensus does not exist.

Lack of agreement emerges from the limited evidence in extant sources. In contrast to the translator of Ben Sira who discusses the reasons for his translation and the problems it presents (Prologue 5–7), none of the translators of the five books of the Pentateuch, or indeed of any of the other books of the LXX (aside from Esther), provides us with such information. The text which gives us an account of the origins of the translation, the *Letter of Aristeas*, together with sources, Jewish and Christian, which retell the same story with variations,[8] presents its own difficulties to the historian. Some dismiss it as no more than a fabricated legend, apologetic in intent and reflecting issues pertinent to the middle of the second century rather than to the translation itself, while others argue that it contains the residue of genuine historical memory.[9] Accordingly, those who dismiss the historical value of *Aristeas tout court*, find evidence for the origins of the LXX in the translation itself, either in the translation technique[10] or in the vocabulary,[11] though such an approach is not restricted to *Aristeas* sceptics.[12] A further problem results from the paucity of our knowledge of Egyptian Judaism in the third century BCE, dependent as we are upon inscriptions, papyri and non-Jewish writings in Greek.[13] This makes judging the plausibility of *Aristeas* at best speculative.[14]

The *Letter of Aristeas*

The *Letter of Aristeas*[15] purports to be an eyewitness account, written by a member of the Ptolemaic court, Aristeas, to his friend, Philocrates, of how the first five books of the Hebrew Bible came to be translated into Greek. In brief it claims that the stimulus for such a decision came from the king, Ptolemy Philadephus II, motivated by his librarian, Demetrius of Phalerum, who, because of his desire that the great library of Alexandria

[7] For a different view, see the discussion in Fernández Marcos 2000, 58–9.

[8] Some would contend that Aristoboulos' account is not dependent upon *Aristeas* and so provides independent evidence for the event. But the argument on this is not clear-cut. For a discussion of these matters see Holladay 1983–96, II: 49–65.

[9] See Honigman 2003, esp. 142–3; and Rajak 2009.

[10] See Pietersma 2002; and Wright 2008.

[11] See Joosten 2006

[12] See Rajak 2009, 125–209, who attributes some historical value to *Aristeas*, but elucidates the origins of the Septuagint by discussing its language.

[13] See Barclay 1996, 29–34.

[14] See Honigman 2003, 117: 'the basic problem remains: the scant corpus of sources available means that we are obliged to use arguments of plausibility in the analysis of the material.'

[15] For editions and introductions to the work see Fernández Marcos 2000, 39.

should contain all the books of the world, wanted a copy of the Pentateuch. The High Priest in Jerusalem agreed to provide seventy-two translators, six from each tribe, to carry out the task, on the condition that 100,000 Jewish prisoners of war in Egypt were released. The translators are duly sent, and after lengthy discussions with the king on an array of intellectual and philosophical matters at a seven-day feast in Alexandria, some of which concern the content of the Pentateuch's laws, they complete their task by mutual agreement amongst themselves on the island of Pharos. At the end of the process, Demetrius reads the translation, is impressed by its contents, and places it in the library.

Criticisms of the content of *Aristeas* originate in the seventeenth century.[16] Deemed a forgery, its author is thought to be a Jew with a good knowledge of Alexandrian court protocol, rather than the pagan Aristeas. Notable, too, are its historical errors. Demetrius of Phalerum, for instance, was never head librarian at Alexandria and had been banished on the accession of Ptolemy II Philadelphus.[17] Implausibilities include its depiction of Ptolemy as subservient to the High Priest in Jerusalem and to the translators during the banquet, where, inter alia, he acknowledges that the Jewish God is synonymous with Zeus;[18] the claim that the king willingly released 100,000 Jewish prisoners of war, and the number of translators and the number of days the translation took (in both cases seventy-two, a multiple of twelve). Apologetic elements of the story of the giving of the law and other themes are derived from Exodus, adding to a sense of its constructed character.[19] Difficulties also arise from the fact that the type of translation which *Aristeas* assumes, namely one that is literary and philosophical,[20] does not comport with the actual translation we possess.[21] All of this leads to the conclusion that the text is at best strikingly distant from the events it purports to describe,[22] and at worst a fabrication.

[16] It originates with Humphry Hody (see Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, 254–8). See too Brock's judgement that *Aristeas* is 'completely misleading' (Brock 1974, 546); and Wright 2008, 161, who speaks of the need 'to abandon models that rely, either explicitly or implicitly, upon Aristeas for answers to those questions'.

[17] Hermippus (Diogenes Laertius 5.78); see Fraser 1972, 690. It is difficult to know whether Hermippus's authority on this matter is any greater than that of Aristoboulos.

[18] See Gruen 1998, 215–16, who shows how *Aristeas* emphasizes the theme of Jewish distinctiveness and superiority.

[19] For parallels between the description of the giving of the Law in Exodus, especially Exod. 14:3–7, and the affirmation of the LXX in *Aristeas* 307–10, see Honigman 2003, 53–9, developing the views of Orlinsky.

[20] Note his portrayal of the translators as philosophers (235) and πεπαιδεύμενοι (321).

[21] See Joosten 2006; and Wright 2008, 151–4.

[22] On the dating see Honigman 2003, 128–30. Most assume a mid-second century date.

Those who support a degree of historicity in *Aristeas* rarely attempt a defence of the work in its entirety[23] – in fact they accept many of the criticisms mentioned above[24] – but argue that *Aristeas* preserves a memory of an event which happened. *Aristeas* becomes a historical myth, a witness to some form of collective memory, celebrated in an annual festival, described by Philo (*Mos.* 2.41–2). In such reconstructions, scholars argue for the involvement of Ptolemy Philadephus, either initiating the process, as *Aristeas* claims, or underwriting financially a Jewish initiative (see below). Such an argument is based upon the plausibility of a king like Ptolemy requesting a translation of a document like the Pentateuch. Evidence for the translation habit in early Ptolemaic Egypt indicates that no translation was instigated privately before the second century BCE.[25] According to some, Ptolemy's desire to have a translation of the Pentateuch is consistent with the claim, found in the Byzantine historian, George Cedrenos, that Ptolemy had 100,000 books translated into Greek and put in his library.[26] His interest in the laws and constitution of other nations is deduced from a similar interest of his father,[27] and from the existence of commissioned works on Egyptians and Babylonians by Manetho and Berossus respectively. Was it not also the case, others argue, that the culturally open[28] Ptolemy may have had a more general interest in the Jews similar to the curiosity shown in the pages of the early third-century BCE Hecateus and Theophrastus?[29] Others add a political motivation. Were not the Jews an important group of people occupying crucial frontier territory between the Ptolemaic Empire and that of the Seleucids? In such an argument, 'putting the Septuagint in his library was another way of claiming Ptolemaic control over the area',[30] increasing the king's sense of prestige.

[23] An exception is Collins 2000. [24] See especially Honigman 2003, 142–3.

[25] See Fernández Marcos 2000, 63. He refers to the fact that Manetho's history of the Pharaohs, Berossus's history of the Babylonians, and Hermippus's Greek commentary on Zaroaster were all sponsored by kings (Ptolemy II, Antiochus I and Asoka respectively).

[26] Cedrenos, *Compendium Historiarum* (PG 121, 321), cited by Orth 2001, 106. Fraser 1972, I: 320, accepts that some translation of Egyptian texts took place in this period, without referring to Cedrenos.

[27] See Orth 2001 who broadly supports Josephus's claim that Ptolemy was interested in knowing the order and constitution of the Jews (Josephus *Ant.* 1.1.10).

[28] See Orth 2001, 106, who states that, as a Macedonian, and therefore a member of a group who had always been perceived as outsiders by other Greeks, Ptolemy would have been more open to non-Greek cultures.

[29] Rajak 2009, 74–8, notes that Theophrastus was an Aristotelian, citing other Aristotelians interested in the Jews, including Agatharcides of Cnidus and Clearchus of Soli. She also notes some Aristotelianisms in *Aristeas*. For the relevant passages from Theophrastus and Hecateus see Stern 1974–84, I, 8–17 and 20–44 respectively.

[30] See Honigman 2003, 117. Honigman ibid., 116, also refers to the Ptolemaia of Ptolemy Philadelphus, recorded in Callixenus of Rhodes, quoting Diogenes Laertius, a four-yearly celebration in honour

It is questionable how concerned Ptolemy was with the Jews in his domain. What we know about his relations to the Jews is found exclusively in *Aristeas* and sources related to it. Curiosity about Jews, and even respect for them, in writers like Theophrastus and Hecateus, does not prove the desire for the translation of a text belonging to a minority group in Egypt. Was the strong Hellenocentricity of the king, evidenced in the setting up of the Mouseion and the library, compatible with the openness to oriental cultures sometimes attributed to him?[31] There is no evidence for the translation of a text comparable to the LXX in the Greek world,[32] or of the presence of translations in Ptolemy's library.[33] Had the translation been initiated by the king and deposited in the library in Alexandria, why is the LXX referred to with such infrequency in pagan literature?[34] And is the generally unliterary Greek of the LXX Pentateuch compatible with the kind of text Ptolemy thought worthy of his library?[35]

The force of some of these points might be softened if we assume that the stimulus came from Jews in Alexandria, moved by a desire to go Greek. They wished to involve the king, either to add prestige by making him a patron, a form of public acceptance for the Jews, or for financial support. We possess epigraphic evidence from *proseuchai* of this period which express loyalty to the king and queen,[36] and such inscriptions could indicate that Jewish distinctiveness was recognized in this period.[37] In such an atmosphere, a plea to the king to help with the translation of a text expressive of their distinctive identity makes sense.[38] But is this enough to indicate that the king would have supported the translation? The demanding financial character of the enterprise is usually assumed by scholars (it is not mentioned explicitly in *Aristeas*), but not proven.[39] The grandson of

of the deified Ptolemy I. The displaying of items which emphasized Ptolemy's association with Alexander the Great, the god Dionysus and items gathered from foreign lands, stressed Ptolemy's claim to universal rule. Arguing that the universal gathering of books was a cultural counterpart to this procession, Honigman places the translation in the context of a similar claim to universal rule.

[31] See Maehler 2004, for the Hellenocentric ideology which influenced Ptolemy's cultural policies. Note also Gruen's point that, even accepting the broad cultural interests of Ptolemy, 'this is a far cry from commissioning a full-scale translation of a lengthy text just to add a Greek version to the shelves' (Gruen 1998, 209 n. 67).

[32] See Brock 1974, 542. [33] See Brock 1972, 14.

[34] The writer of *Aristeas* feels the need to refer to this fact and explain it away (see 314–16). On this Momigliano 1975, 90–2. For the claim that the LXX is better known among pagans than some claim see Rajak 2009, 258–77. Note that Papyrus 957 was used as mummy cartonnage, possibly implying wider dissemination of the work among Egyptians.

[35] See Joosten 2006; and Aitken in this volume.

[36] For these inscriptions see Horbury and Noy 1992, nos. 22 and 117.

[37] See Fraser 1972, I: 690, who argues that the translation may have been stimulated by a sense of loyalty, but denies the involvement of the king.

[38] Honigman 2003, 103–5, notes such petitioning in two Zenon papyri.

[39] Rajak 2009, 88, assumes the undertaking to be expensive without citing evidence. Obviously the process described in *Aristeas* would have been expensive.

Ben Sira was able to make a translation of his grandfather's work, comparable in size to one of the books of the Pentateuch, apparently without assistance. From an admittedly later period, the mid-second to third centuries CE, the revisions of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion seem to have involved a small number of people, and yet these are translations of all the books of the Hebrew Bible.

One other proposal regarding the monarch has been offered by Mélèze-Modrzejewski. He claims that the residue of historical truth in *Aristeas* lies in the translation serving as a *politikos nomos*, that is as a law for an immigrant minority in Egypt.[40] Parallels for such an undertaking in Egyptian law, and the evidence of fragmentary third-century BCE papyri relating to Jewish litigants, are adduced in support. The papyri, however, do not necessarily support these claims, either for the existence of a *politikos nomos* relating to the Jews or for the application of biblical laws.[41] Later evidence in the Heracleopolis papyri (dated to the reign of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes, 144–133 BCE)[42] may imply such a reality, with papyrus 4's possible reference to Deut. 24:1–4 and its mention of a bill of divorce (βιβλίον ἀποστασίου).[43] But this may constitute what Rajak has termed evidence for 'a secondary stage in the acclimatization of the Septuagint in a world of legal pluralism',[44] suggested by the probable date of the papyrus in the mid-second century. We also have to wonder why it would have been necessary to translate the whole of the Pentateuch, which, though referred to as *nomos*, contains much non-legal material.

There is no one observation which proves that *Aristeas* is a literary fabrication exclusively reflecting the context in which it was written. It remains a possibility that the text preserves a memory of distant events involving a king and the Jews in a joint endeavour to translate the Pentateuch into Greek.[45] We might wonder why the author would invent the involvement of a pagan king, implying also a reluctance on the part of the Jews to agree to such an undertaking, and how and why a celebration of the translation in a festival arose without some memory lying behind the story, although explanations are certainly available.[46] But it is surely true that without

[40] Mélèze Modrzejewski 1995, 107–12.

[41] See Dorival 2001, 579–80, noting that the reference to *politikos nomos in* P.Jud. 1.128 (from 218 BCE) is a conjecture of the editor of the papyrus; and that the same term in P.Jud. 1.19 (from 226 BCE) need not be interpreted as Mélèze Modrzejewski envisages.

[42] For a discussion of these see Honigman 2003, 109.

[43] Rajak 2009, 85. [44] Rajak 2009, 85. [45] Rajak 2009, 35.

[46] Gruen 1998, 189–245, shows how in a world peopled by kings, as the Hellenistic world was, Jews were keen to produce stories which 'gave Jewish matters a place in the high policy of Hellenistic kings' (189).

Aristeas, there would be nothing to lead us to assume that a Ptolemaic king was involved in the creation of the translation. There are sufficient historical doubts about the story as it stands to make it too problematic a witness to the origins of the LXX.

Ignoring *Aristeas*: the needs of the Jewish community

If we are forced to dispense with *Aristeas*, what explanations remain? Alternative theories are mainly based upon the assumed needs of the Jewish community.[47] Some have argued for the apologetic origins, an attempt to show the surrounding Greek world the excellence of the Jewish law, revealing what had previously lain concealed in a script and language readable only by a few.[48] Support for such a view is possibly seen in an early Egyptian writer, Manetho, who peddled polemical accounts of events recorded in the Pentateuch, not least the Exodus.[49] The theory, however, suffers from the probability that the translation had a principally Jewish audience in mind, and that it cannot prove that the translation of the LXX betrays *consistent* apologetic tendencies.

Some scholars have argued for an origin in the liturgical needs of the Jewish community. Thackeray suggested that from the third century onwards there was a need for a cycle of lectionary readings in Jewish *proseuchai*.[50] Despite the early presence of *proseuchai* in Egypt, the evidence for such a public reading or studying of the law at this time does not exist.[51] Some wonder whether it would have been worth translating the whole of the Pentateuch simply to accommodate the more selective needs of liturgy.[52] Moreover, it is difficult to demonstrate that the translations betray a liturgical setting, even if we knew, and we cannot, what such signs might look like.[53] Against this view it has also been argued that the liturgical need to translate into Greek was less acute since the retention of Hebrew

[47] Brock notes that 'the work was by Hellenised Jews, and for Hellenised Jews, something that one would have expected all along, and which would not have been questioned but for the fantasy presented by the Letter of Aristeas.' (Brock 1974, 548–9).

[48] See Philo, *Mos.* 2.27 and 44, where the translation is described as for the benefit of the Greek world. A modern version of the same idea is found in Rösel 1994.

[49] Some attribute importance to the fact that LXX Exod. 4:6–7 omits reference to leprosy which featured strongly in Manetho's polemical accounts of the Jewish Exodus story. Note also the apparent sensitivity to issues relating to kingship seen in LXX Lev. 18:21; Deut. 17:14–20, and Lev. 11:6 and Deut. 14:7.

[50] See Thackeray 1923.

[51] The first evidence for the reading of the law in the synagogue comes in Philo.

[52] See Bickerman 2007, 167.

[53] See Dines 2004, 48–9.

as a liturgical language may have seemed appropriate.[54] Nonetheless Neh. 8:7–8, where reading of the law seems connected to understanding it, and Philo's description of prayer houses as schools of ancestral philosophy, might suggest the need for translations in a liturgical setting.

Evidence in the LXX for interpretations of the Hebrew have led some to argue for exegetical concerns as primarily influencing its translation.[55] The idea of its principal purpose lying, however, in its interpretative/exegetical character is an exaggeration of a small truth, and most hold the LXX Pentateuch as primarily a translation. Van der Kooij has claimed that the prologue to Ben Sira implies that the translator is a scribe, and in its obvious concern with the question of rendering Hebrew into Greek 'points to the fact that the translations originated in the setting of a scholarly milieu ("school")'.[56] He argues against a liturgical setting since, in that setting, many books were used selectively, whereas in principle all books of the Bible were considered subjects of study, and, therefore of scribal use.[57] Here, then, the emphasis is on an undertaking that is private and scholarly.

Such a scribal theory converges with one of the most debated of recent theses concerning LXX origins, associated in particular with Pietersma and, to a lesser extent, Wright.[58] The 'interlinear theory' builds on observations made by Bickerman, and especially Brock, who had sought to argue that the LXX conformed more closely to a word-for-word translation, rather than a sense-for-sense one,[59] indicating the desire to bring the readers to the Hebrew text.[60] Proponents of the theory have argued that the translation of the Pentateuch betrays heavy interference from the original Hebrew. While the translation is seen as strongly subservient to the Hebrew, this is not taken to imply that 'every linguistic item in the Greek can only be understood by reference to the parent text … but rather that

[54] 'Since liturgy has primarily to do with performance instead of comprehension, liturgy tends to be more tolerant of text in a foreign medium than is education' (Pietersma 2002, 358).

[55] See Horbury 2006, 100, esp. n. 39 containing a list of scholars who have advocated such a view of the LXX Pentateuch. Horbury is specifically concerned with texts which reflect a messianic interpretation (e. g., Gen. 49:8–12; Num. 24:7, 17; Deut. 33:4–5).

[56] Van der Kooij 1999, 213.

[57] Van der Kooij 1999 also points to evidence from the Palestinian Talmud that Aquila was originally translated for a scholarly purpose, noting that in the relevant passage, the latter is said to have laid his translation before R. Eleazar and R. Joshua (see *y. Meg.* 1:11 [71c]). Earlier van der Kooij had argued for the role of scribes as readers of the law, and the transformation of this role into translators.

[58] See Pietersma 2002; and Wright 2008.

[59] Brock 1972, invokes the Ciceronian distinction between an *orator* who gives a free but literary translation, and the *interpres* who gives a literal one.

[60] See Brock 1972, 17.

the Greek *qua* Greek has a dimension of unintelligibility'.[61] Various phenomena, including transliterations and calques, show the Greek to be unintelligible without recourse to the Hebrew. These observations have led Pietersma to argue, drawing on papyri which seek to teach Koine-speaking students the rudiments of Homeric Greek,[62] that originally the Pentateuchal translation was an aid to understanding the Hebrew. The most likely origin for such a text was the school.[63]

Such a view has the advantage that it appears to emerge from close scrutiny of the text, which, once one has rejected *Aristeas*, is all we are left with; it draws on known evidence for a form of teaching Homeric Greek which appears to provide an actual parallel; and it makes much of places in the LXX where understanding the Greek is only possible if one has the Hebrew. Moreover, both Pietersma, and especialy Wright, helpfully show up the disjunction between the claims of *Aristeas* for the quality of the translation, on the one hand, and the *realia* of the translation itself, on the other.[64]

If they are right, then the LXX translation began life as something which bore almost no relation to what it in fact became. This is the case with other forms of the scribal theory, but particularly so with this one. What was once an aid to understanding the Hebrew became a self-standing, authoritative text in its own right.[65] On this view *Aristeas* witnesses to the third stage of a four-stage process rather than its beginning point.[66]

The 'interlinear' theory has been heavily criticized.[67] Some have noted the absence of papyrological and literary evidence for interlinear texts of Hebrew and Greek,[68] and the difficulty of deducing anything from Graeco-Roman paedagogic processes. 'There may have been Jewish

[61] Pietersma 2002, 350. [62] See esp. *PSI* 12.1276, containing *Iliad* 2.617–38, 639–70.

[63] Brock 1974, 550, who does not advocate an interlinear approach, had suggested an educational setting but not one as specific as Pietersma.

[64] On this see Wright 2008, 150–51. Drawing on the work of the translation theorist, Gideon Toury, Wright argues that the cultural function which *Aristeas* envisages the translation fulfilling does not comport with the character of the translation itself. See n. 20 above and the reference to the translators as philosophers and educated. It should be noted, however, that at *Aristeas* 307 the translation is referred to as a 'transcription' (μεταγραφή), and at 310 as having been produced 'extremely accurately' (κατὰ πᾶν ἠκριβωμένως), terms which suit literal translation.

[65] Pietersma 2002, 350, criticizes Brock for not arriving at this conclusion.

[66] The first stage is marked by the Hebrew text as a sole authority, the second by the Greek being used as a crib for the Hebrew, the third by the Greek being considered a self-standing authority, and the fourth by a debate over the relative authority of the Hebrew and the Greek (Pietersma 2002, 360).

[67] For criticisms see Joosten 2008a.

[68] The logistics of working with two scrolls seems very difficult. Pietersma 2002, 350, does not think that this is a problem for his theory, but entertains the possibility that such a diglot manuscript could have existed.

schools in Alexandria, but we know next to nothing about them.'[69] Links with Greek schools are possible, but there is little in the Septuagint to indicate any knowledge of Greek philological methods.[70] Moreover, in the interlinear theory there is a tendency to exaggerate the degree of interference from the Hebrew, for as Brock and many others have emphasized, the type of translation we see in the Pentateuch is not consistently literal. Furthermore, one would expect a much greater degree of interference if the Greek translation were an aid to learning Hebrew, comparable to what we find in the so-called *kaige* recension and in the much later version of Aquila.[71] Barthélemy,[72] Brock and others have argued that these later texts demonstrate an interest in producing versions which more clearly reflected the Hebrew – indeed Brock sees *Aristeas* as a response to such a growing interest in and reverence for the Hebrew, mainly arising in Judea.[73] We also cannot be certain of the status of the Hebrew in the third century.[74] Moreover, there are too many examples of what one might term literary translations in the Pentateuch to make one think that reference to the Hebrew was consistently the primary concern.[75] Furthermore, soon after the creation of the translation the LXX came to be a self-standing text which apparently could be read without reference to the Hebrew.[76]

Rejection of an absolute form of the interlinear theory has not led to a wholesale abandonment of some of its insights or of the recognition of the distinctive character of the translation. Rajak, for instance, accepts that Septuagint Greek is 'unique and peculiar', and argues against those who would see the Greek of the Pentateuch as explicable 'primarily because of the inhibitions and limitations of its translators'.[77] It is better understood as containing a language deliberately chosen by the translators, so that it reflected the Hebrew, resulting in what she terms a 'foreignizing' translation, indicating 'a reluctance to accede totally to a Hellenizing "project."' The Septuagint, then, provides both evidence of Hellenizing tendencies amongst Jews, and of approximately the opposite.[78]

69 Joosten 2008a, 171.
70 See Siegert 2001.
71 For this point, see Rajak 2009, 144.
72 Barthelemy 1963.
73 See Brock 1972, 25–7.
74 See Dines 2004, 53.
75 See Joosten 2008a, 175; and Dines 2004, 55–6. Brock 1972, 20, notes that the translation is neither consistently literal or free.
76 Note the use at the end of third century BCE of LXX Exodus by Demetrius the Chronographer.
77 Rajak 2009, 134.
78 For Rajak the Septuagint promotes language maintenance but within acculturation (Rajak 2009, 153).

Others, equally attentive to questions of language, have advanced different theses. Jan Joosten[79] notes that one of the best arguments against the authenticity of *Aristeas* lies in the disjunction between the type of literary language one would expect for a king, and the actual language of the Pentateuch translation: more the language of the highway than of the Ptolemaic court.[80] Its unliterary style, its failure to translate certain Hebrew terms, and its calques,[81] reflects an inner-Jewish audience. As a sociolect, it derives from a group of individuals sufficiently rich and powerful to execute the project but not part of the elite class. On the basis of some distinctive uses of words,[82] Joosten locates such a group in the army. The LXX, for Joosten, is the translation of soldiers, a well-known group of Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt. In contradistinction to the interlinear view he is clear that '[w]hatever its defects … the Septuagint was intended from the start to function as a substitute for the Hebrew Scriptures'.[83]

Joosten's theory has not undergone the same kind of scrutiny as the interlinear theory, and one suspects that further work on the prevalence of unexpected military terminology in the LXX will have to be done before his argument has any traction. Its weakness lies in the fact that it seeks to locate the translation among a group for whom we have very little evidence, without giving us a solid reason for why such a group would have wanted such a translation, or whether they possessed the kind of bilingualism necessary to produce it. One also wonders whether Joosten has sufficiently accounted for the presence of Hebraizing tendencies in the translation; and whether his article presents a tension between the presence of this latter phenomenon and his general conviction that the LXX reflects 'la langue de la rue'.

In all of the theories mentioned, the question of control is raised. *Aristeas* is explicit on this question, presenting the translation as something sanctioned by an Egyptian monarch, the Jewish High Priest in Jerusalem, and endorsed collectively by the Jewish community in Alexandria. Other theories also assume some level of control, for instance the liturgical theory, but others, not least the school theory, could be taken to adopt a more decentralized view. The question of control is raised in another way by a discussion arising from the broad field of 'text criticism'.

[79] Joosten 2006. [80] His argument here is similar to that of Wright 2008.

[81] Joosten 2006, 356: 'Les barbarismes et les calques indiquent que la Septante ne vise pas un public grec.'

[82] Joosten emphasizes the essentially military term ἀποσκευή used in reference to the family (see Gen. 43:8).

[83] Joosten 2008a, 178.

P. Kahle argued that *Aristeas* was fictional, and constituted a justification for the production of an official version of the LXX in response to the presence of a plurality of texts which had come into being, in liturgical and related contexts, in the period preceding the writing of *Aristeas* in the second century BCE.[84] In this thesis *Aristeas* is a propagandist of the final version of the LXX which sought to bring order to the textual chaos which preceded its production. According to Kahle, the texts which Aristeas tried to replace in a unitary translation went on being used after the production of the LXX, and it was only the Christians who established a final text. Kahle saw an analogy in the development of the targumim where the written version of these texts brought order to a varied set of earlier oral transmissions. He found support in *Aristeas* itself which he argued implied the presence of multiple versions of the Greek (§§ 30–1). His prime evidence for his general argument came from citations of the Greek Bible in Philo, the New Testament, some of the early papyri of the LXX, Qumran and other findings, such as the text of the Twelve Minor Prophets from Naḥal Ḥever. All of these witnessed to the existence of a textual plurality that had preceded the creation of the LXX in the time of *Aristeas*. Kahle's thesis directly contradicted the consensus of the time associated with P. Lagarde, which posited an Urtext of the LXX from which variations emerged.

Kahle's thesis has met with little acceptance. Most question the analogy with the targumim, and most argue that *Aristeas* 30–1 refers to manuscripts of the Hebrew, not the Greek.[85] Most also agree that the textual evidence Kahle brought forward is of little support. His pupil, P. Katz, showed that the vast majority of Philo's quotations are in fact Septuagintal, that the quotations of the LXX which vary from the LXX need not be explained as Kahle thought, but could be accounted for in ways other than the ones he suggested, that the early papyri and Qumran are not witnesses to non-Septuagintal readings, and that the manuscripts from Naḥal Ḥever witness to Hebraizing revisions of the LXX text, rather than pre-Septuagintal translations. This last point, which emerges from the work of Barthélemy, led Brock and others, as we noted, to argue that *Aristeas* witnessed to one of a number of defences of the LXX against competing Hebraizing translations which emerged from the second century BCE onwards.[86]

[84] See Kahle 1915; Kahle 1959; and Fernández Marcos 2000, 53–7.
[85] See Gooding 1963.
[86] So Philo's view that the LXX is not a version at all but a sister text (see especially Philo, *Mos.* 2.40)

But we should not dismiss Kahle. Problems remain for the Lagardians with some of the books for which we have two translations, where it is not always easy to explain the differences between the two consistently; and similarly some of the early papyrus or leather fragments of the Septuagint provide difficulties. So, for instance in 4QLXXLev.[a] a number of phenomena occur which are not easily explained as a recension of the so-called 'Urtext' (the use of different equivalents for the same Hebrew word; different and freer renderings for a phrase; textual variants at the Greek or Hebrew level; and other more distant renderings, possibly resulting from a desire to improve the Greek).[87]

What is most important is that, if Lagarde and others are right, then we have to assume that the LXX translation almost immediately acquired a good deal of authority, perhaps owing to the translation being sanctioned by the Jewish community at large, or certainly by some of its now forgotten leaders. This brings us back to a view of its origins which is closer to *Aristeas* than some might want.

Some concluding thoughts

When I was a research student, Nicholas de Lange warned me that scholars should be wary of responding to the *realia* alone. In the case of the origins of the LXX, the *realia* are very few and difficult to assess, consisting mainly of a problematic account of the origins of the translation in *Aristeas* and subsequent sources, fragments of evidence about Jews in third-century Egypt, and the translation itself. The critical summary above of the *status quaestionis* shows that there are no theories which unambiguously carry the day, although some observations point in one way rather than another.

First, there are grounds for assuming that the LXX originated as the result of a communal decision, or one involving a group of influential persons. Such a view is supported by the fact that the translation seems to have been written by several hands, and indeed Exodus by two,[88] by the Lagardian thesis that the text was responding to a situation in which there

[87] See Davies 1983.

[88] In a lecture in the University of Cambridge, John Lee argued that the translation of the Pentateuch was a collaborative enterprise, noting distinctive Greek translations of Hebrew words and phrases (cultic terms such as θυσιαστήριον, ὀσμή εὐωδίας, ὁλόκωμα), which appear across all or some of the books of the Pentateuch. He argued that such a phenomenon was best explained by the translators creating a glossary of Greek translations, equivalent to the glossaries which existed of Homeric Greek. His observations are compatible with the view that the enterprise lay in a community-based decision.

appears to have been no other authoritative translation in existence (even if there was unofficial activity, including oral translation or partial rendition), and by the fact that the translation appears to have quickly become authoritative, as we can see from its use by Demetrius the Chronographer and the relative stability of its text until the second century BCE. The possibility that the king, Ptolemy Philadelphus II, was involved cannot be excluded especially as we have little knowledge about how unified the Jewish community in Egypt was at this time. The fact that support for such a view comes from a text as suspect as *Aristeas* means that we have to reserve judgement, especially when the translation produced is not one of a literary kind, which we might expect if it was written for a Greek king. Furthermore, the translation betrays an inner-Jewish character noticeable in the manner of its translation, opting for calques and transliterations of certain important Hebrew terms. Second, there are good reasons to assume that the need for such a translation arose from inner-Jewish concerns. A lack of knowledge of Hebrew may have been a factor, and may have led to the use of expert translators from Judea, as *Aristeas* suggests, though certainty about the level of knowledge of Hebrew in Egypt at this time is impossible. Such an assumed deficit in linguistic knowledge may have been felt in the *proseuchai* during Jewish worship, though we know nothing about worship at this time, and we might wonder whether the kind of selective translation which would have been required in that context would have led to the translation of the whole Pentateuch. An educational motive is also possible as leaders of the Jewish community sought to educate younger Jews in their history and customs, but again our lack of knowledge on this matter allows for little certainty.

Broader cultural factors may also have played a role. In the so-called salt tax papyri, dating from the 250s,[89] we read of Jews in Trikomia in the Fayyum who were called 'Hellenes' or 'Greeks', a status which exempted them from the tax. Such evidence from a time near to the one generally agreed for the translation, is perhaps indicative of a desire on the part of some Jews to go Greek (the term probably defined their education or role in the administration).[90] When we add this evidence to that of the synagogue inscriptions from mid-240s, very close in date to the end of Ptolemy's reign, with their dedications to the monarch and his queen in Greek, we gain tantalizing evidence of some degree of acculturation. Jews loyal to their monarch and keen to acquire Greek status may have

[89] For the text see Clarysse and Thompson 2006, I: 360–1 (P.Count 26.110–98); and for a discussion II: 145–8.

[90] See Aitken 2011a; Aitken 2011b.

wanted to give further expression to their Greekness through translating the Pentateuch, in part because they gave expression to Jewish identity through their laws and the recounting of seminal events in Jewish history. It is also possible that the polemical writings of Manetho and others contributed to the need to have a translation. If the translation was Alexandrian, then that city should enter any assessment of the question of origins – a city so intent upon the promotion of a Greek literary culture through the library and the Mouseion. As Dines has written, in a sentence which neatly balances the specific and the vague, 'Alexandrian Judaism may have almost accidentally pioneered a new stage in the history of the Bible in response to the excitement of living in an educated milieu which expressed itself in written words.'[91] And not only excitement, but a desire to appear a part of that culture.[92]

[91] Dines 2004, 60.

[92] Gruen 2008, 155: 'Having the holy books rendered into Greek carried considerable symbolic meaning. It signified that Jews had a legitimate place in the prevailing culture of the Mediterranean. Their scriptures did not belong to an isolated and marginal group.'

CHAPTER 8

The language of the Septuagint and Jewish–Greek identity

James Aitken

> The popular Greek dialect was not spoken and written by the Jews, without some intermixtures of a foreign kind. Particularly did they intermix many idioms and the general complexion of their vernacular language. Hence arose a Judaizing Greek dialect; which was in some good measure unintelligible to the native Greeks, and became an object of their contempt.[1]

The establishment of a Jewish–Greek literary tradition played an important role in the expression of a Jewish–Greek identity and in providing a medium of Greek philosophical expression. Our earliest surviving Jewish literary work in Greek is the Septuagint, or more specifically the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek. Undertaken at some point in the third century BCE,[2] the style of language adopted had an influence both upon later translations of biblical books and upon Jewish–Greek compositions in their own right. That very style has, nevertheless, been at the centre of controversy over the past century, although the debate began in the Renaissance.[3]

Winer's words above are reflective of the earlier debate. Recognizing a combination of non-classical features and interference in syntax and semantics from Hebrew, it was presumed that there was a distinctive Jewish dialect. That language was in turn seen as expressive of the social position of Jews; in Winer's case negatively as a cause of Judaeophobia. While scholars have now questioned some of the assumptions of this debate, including the presumption of a distinct Jewish dialect and the association between that dialect and a lower social position, the nature of the language is still thought to be important for any consideration of

[1] Winer 1825, 26.

[2] In addition to the tradition as recorded in *Aristeas*, one can cite the second-century BCE Greek fragment of Deuteronomy as a *terminus ante quem*. The language also conforms to a date of the third century for the Pentateuch: see Lee 1983, 139–44; Evans 2001, 263–4.

[3] Ros 1940 traces the history of the debate. For a summary see Horsley 1989, 37–9.

the social position of Jews and their identity. An evaluation of the nature of the Greek is therefore in order, along with a consideration of how far we might derive from linguistic evidence views of Jewish identity, a topic with which Nicholas de Lange has engaged through his many publications on Judaeo-Greek.

The Greek of the Septuagint

Distinctive features of the Greek of the Septuagint are easily summarized, some but not all of them arising from the translation process and the interference brought about by close adherence to the source text. A short passage from Exodus is illustrative of many of the examples:

Exodus 6	
5 καὶ ἐγὼ εἰσήκουσα τὸν στεναγμὸν τῶν υἱῶν Ισραηλ, **ὃν** οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι καταδουλοῦνται **αὐτούς**, καὶ ἐμνήσθην τῆς διαθήκης ὑμῶν.	5 And I heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I remembered your covenant.
6 **βάδιζε εἰπὸν** τοῖς υἱοῖς Ισραηλ **λέγων** Ἐγὼ κύριος **καὶ** ἐξάξω ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τῆς δυναστείας τῶν Αἰγυπτίων **καὶ** ῥύσομαι ὑμᾶς ἐκ τῆς δουλείας **καὶ** λυτρώσομαι ὑμᾶς **ἐν** βραχίονι ὑψηλῷ **καὶ** κρίσει μεγάλῃ.	6 Go say unto the children of Israel, saying 'I am the lord, and I will bring you out from the dominion of the Egyptians, and I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with a high arm, and with great judgement.'

There are many typical features of the translation that we can note:

(a) The word order of the Hebrew is followed closely in the Greek.
(b) The parataxis of Hebrew (using *waw*) is likewise adhered to as a result of following the word order, leading to the repeated use of καί in verse 6. It is only in verse 9 that this is broken by the use of the particle δέ (ἐλάλησεν δὲ Μωϋσῆς), a variation from the norm that is found only occasionally.
(c) Hebrew syntactic features are represented in Greek, including the rendering of the relative particle by a resumptive pronoun in verse 5, ὃν οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι καταδουλοῦνται αὐτούς. Despite the Hebrew particle אשר not being declinable, the Greek has declined the relative (ὃν), if not in agreement in number with the pronoun.[4]

[4] Note too the unnecessary repetition of the pronoun in ῥύσομαι ὑμᾶς … λυτρώσομαι ὑμᾶς (verse 6). The repetition of the possessive pronouns could also be influenced by Hebrew, although Sollamo 1995 has shown its frequency in Koine.

(d) Hebrew idiom is represented in verse 6 by λέγων as the equivalent of the Hebrew introductory formula for direct speech, לאמר. This feature is possible in Greek but its frequency in the Septuagint is generated by the Hebrew idiom. Elsewhere we see such renderings as the Hebrew infinitive absolute translated by cognates in Greek (e.g., φεύγων φεύγω or φυγῇ φεύγω), itself a Greek idiom but appearing more frequently in the Septuagint than it would in standard Greek.
(e) The frequent use of auxiliary verbs in Hebrew has generated the auxiliary in verse 6, βάδιζε εἰπόν, 'Go say'.[5]
(f) The development of specific terminology or the extension of the semantics of words appear to be frequent phenomena in the Septuagint, here demonstrated by διαθήκη (verse 5) meaning 'covenant'.[6]
(g) The inclusion of words typical of Koine but not classical Greek, here partially represented by λυτρόω 'to ransom' (verse 6). Many other words exclusive to Koine or in contemporary usage could be cited: ἐκτοκίζω, 'lend at interest'; ἀρχιοινοχόος, 'chief cup-bearer'; τοπάρχης, 'governor of a district'.[7]
(h) The omission of a copula is frequent, as in verse 6: Ἐγὼ κύριος, 'I *am* the Lord'. Once more this is permissible in Greek, but its frequency is generated by the Hebrew idiom.
(i) Transliteration of names or of some terms is common, here demonstrated by Ισραηλ. In such cases the transliterations can be non-declinable.[8] Some transliterations can be seen as loan-words, such as χαλβάνη in Exod. 30:34.
(j) Compound verbs are common, perhaps reflecting a development within Koine, and especially those that seem to have been used more frequently, such as εἰσήκουσα in verse 5.[9]
(k) The representation of the Hebrew prepositions by a standard Greek equivalent leads to the use of ἐν (-ב) in verse 6. In this case the simple Greek comitative dative might have been expected, although, in addition to the Hebrew interference, we should recognize in Greek of this time the decline in the dative case in favour of prepositional phrases.[10]
(l) The marking of verbal agents can also be influenced by the Hebrew in the same way as other prepositions.[11]

[5] For the development of one particular auxiliary in Koine and its reflection in the Septuagint, see Lee 2009.
[6] See Lee 1983, 30. [7] Lee 1983.
[8] See Tov 2010a, 531–3. [9] See Cox 1981.
[10] See Horrocks 1997, 57–9. [11] George 2005; cf. George 2010, 270.

As noted, many of the features indicated can be attributed to interference from the source text, but the Hebrew is not the only source of interference. Spoken Aramaic might well have influenced some idioms, being responsible for the morphology of some loan-words: for example, πάσχα < Arm. *pascha'* (Heb. *pēsach*), γειώρας < Arm. *gywr'* (Heb. *gēr*) and σαββάτα < Arm. *sabbata'* (Heb. *šabbat*).[12] Likewise we find Egyptian loan-words such as ἄχι 'reed-grass' (Gen. 41:2) and θῖβις 'basket' (Exod. 2:3), and, in a later Septuagint translation, a Seleucid term derived from Persian: γαζοφύλαξ 'keeper of the treasury' (1 Chr. 28:1; in contrast to θησαυροφύλαξ, 2 Esdr. 5:14).

It is notable that the language choice is carefully balanced, representing conformity to the Hebrew syntax and a consistent lexical equivalence, and at the same time reflecting developments within Koine Greek.[13] Undoubtedly, weight should be given to the Hebrew source as necessitating such choices and thereby accounting for their high frequency, although the translators were sensitive enough to produce Greek that conformed to the grammar of the time. The simple example of the declining of the relative in Exod. 6:5 indicates their concern to present accurate Greek even if following the structure of the Hebrew. Nonetheless, with its strange syntax, unusual meanings or new words, and apparent lack of refinement, the Septuagint could strike one trained in classical Greek as a distinct branch of Greek. This is where our story begins.

Theories on the language situation

Despite some authors in late antiquity identifying a separate Alexandrian dialect,[14] they never went as far as to speak of a Jewish, Christian or biblical dialect. Such terms were to be employed in the Renaissance when the 'Purists' sought parallels to biblical Greek in classical 'Atticist' Greek and the 'Hebraists' by contrast emphasized the oddities in the Greek. The roots of this debate lay in theological disputes: a peculiar biblical Greek dialect reflected its unique source, spiritual inspiration.[15] At the same time ethnic theories on how language defines race and culture also contributed to the view that the Jews as a separate group spoke a distinct form of Greek.

[12] Joosten 2008b.

[13] This is discussed by George 2010, 271, who focuses on parataxis, increased use of the pronoun and non-standard prepositional constructions.

[14] Fournet 2009.

[15] Rajak 2011, 279, notes the anti-Jewish side of these arguments in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Germany when Jews were thought of as incapable of speaking true German and instead employed their own patois.

The discovery of papyri and inscriptions changed this debate.[16] Deissmann became the leading proponent of a new understanding of how much biblical Greek, both of the Septuagint and the New Testament, was typical of contemporary Greek.[17] The Greek could be said to be the standard language of the time, notwithstanding bilingual interference either from the source text or from the spoken language. Where the idiom seemed to be Semitic, Deissmann was able to show it was on many an occasion attested in contemporary Greek. One such case is the word ἀντιλήμπτωρ (appearing sixteen times in LXX Psalms), which Deissmann was the first to identify from papyri as having significance for biblical Greek.[18] He noted that this word had not hitherto been authenticated outside biblical literature, and had been seen as 'peculiar to the Septuagint', but now could be understood as a word originally used in petition to the Ptolemaic king (e.g., *UPZ* 1 14 r2.18). Such discoveries led him and others, including Moulton,[19] to confirm that the language of the Bible was comparable to the language that was attested in some documentary papyri and typical of the vernacular used in Egypt in Ptolemaic times. This was not to place Deissmann on the Purist side (a misunderstanding noted by Horsley 1989, 38–9) as he did not resort to Atticist examples in Greek, but it brought a new understanding – that the Greek of the Septuagint was not entirely foreign and yet also not that of the best writers. As Deissmann put it, 'When the question is raised whether the Greek Bible is a monument of the vernacular or of the literary language, it must be borne in mind that the boundaries between the two are fluctuating.'[20]

This did not resolve the issue. Brock has identified the ambiguity in later discussions of Greek, indicating the apparent contradiction in Bickerman's study that the Greek on the one hand is the common speech of the time, but on the other is 'foreign and clumsy'.[21] This reinforced suggestions that there is something peculiar about the Greek of the Septuagint. Gehman, Hill and Turner each returned to the question in different ways. Gehman particularly spoke again of a Jewish–Greek 'jargon' that would be intelligible in the synagogues,[22] and Turner continued to apply the term dialect.[23] In these cases they are recognizing that there are distinctive terms and linguistic forms arising from particular speech communities. Religious terms are naturally only understood or used by those within the community,

[16] The standard critique of this view is Horsley 1989. See too de Lange 2007c, 639–43.
[17] See in particular for the Septuagint, Deissmann 1895 (later revised and expanded).
[18] Deissmann, 1895, 86–7. [19] E.g., Moulton 1917.
[20] Deissmann 1909, 215. [21] Brock 1972, 31, citing Bickerman 1959, 12.
[22] Gehman 1951, esp. 81; cf. Walser 2001. [23] Turner 1955.

and, in addition, terms known from the linguistic community of Hebrew or Aramaic speakers and readers are also infiltrating the language. Where particular terms are used within a social group we should now speak of a sociolect rather than a dialect, since the phenomenon is not a difference in language structure but in social use.[24] Where new terms are formed through language contact, this is typical of a bilingual situation, even if it is heightened in translated texts. Nonetheless, the assumption that there is a social significance to the type of Greek manifested in the Septuagint, and in the Bible more generally, remains strong. Even for Deissmann there was a social and theological reason behind the languages:

> But to expect literary Greek of the apostle [Paul] would be wrong – he was no littérateur, but a writer of letters, who spoke as the common people of Ephesus and Corinth spoke; he was just Paul who knew the world-speech of Asia, Europe, and Egypt, Paul with a native eloquence and a prophetic pathos which came from his soul of fire; and as he spoke so he wrote … and the same is true of most of the books of the Septuagint; they swarm with words which were the abomination of the Atticists.[25]

In recent studies the significance of the Greek language of the Septuagint has been given a fresh analysis. Focus has particularly been on the Pentateuch, both for determining the origins of the first translations and for establishing the influence that that translation had on subsequent translations and on the history of biblical Greek. It has been recognized that the language is a guide, and a surer one than later legends, to the origins and social setting of the production of the translation, but that it needs to be examined by more sophisticated methods than those employed in the Jewish dialect debate. A significant starting point was the article by Pietersma outlining the interlinear paradigm, written in conversation with Boyd-Taylor.[26] He proposed that the interference from the Hebrew source text in the Greek was indicative of an 'interlinear' approach to translation. He sees the translation methods as comparable to Homeric school books,[27] drawing further on the suggestion of Brock that the school context was the origin for Greek texts that are corrected towards the Hebrew.[28] Wright also focuses on the extent of the Hebrew interference in the Greek, and uses it as a means to disprove the *Aristeas* legend.[29] He sees the odd Greek of the translation, requiring an apology both in *Aristeas* and the prologue to Sirach, as ill-suited to the needs of a Ptolemaic king, and therefore

[24] See Joosten 2011, 6–7 on Septuagint Greek as a sociolect. [25] Deissmann 1909, 215.
[26] Pietersma 2002; cf. Boyd-Taylor 2006; Boyd-Taylor 2011. [27] Pietersma 2002, 358–9.
[28] Brock 1979, 73–4. [29] Wright 2011; cf. Wright 2010.

concludes that the translation must be a product for internal Jewish consumption alone.[30]

The complexity of the issue is seen in the presence of competing voices who largely rely upon the same linguistic data but reach different conclusions. Thus, Rajak has made a case for the peculiarities of LXX Greek to be explicable as an intentionally artificial language, conveying the sacrality of the Scriptures and enforcing the identity of the Jewish community.[31] She presents socio-historical reasons for this, portraying the Jews as needing to bolster their identity in a hostile Graeco-Roman world, and argues from terminology that the language has been created as a special form of Jewish language.[32] Notably, in contradistinction to Pietersma and Wright, this peculiar Greek is not a reason for a lack of Ptolemaic sponsorship, which she presumes is vital, but a sign of the importance of the Bible and the care taken in translating it. Her inspiration comes in part from more modern movements in translation,[33] although it raises the question of the nature and understanding of ancient translation to which we will return below. Others have recently argued for the translation being a major scholarly undertaking,[34] although only sometimes invoking the language as evidence.[35]

The most sustained application of internal evidence of the language to theories regarding the educational background and intention of the translation has been that of Joosten.[36] He points to the use of popular, non-literary, Greek words, rather than the high literary Greek expected of an Alexandrian writer. For him this indicates that the translation could not have been made for a Ptolemy, who would have expected something more refined. Rather the Greek is influenced significantly by Aramaic (cf. Joosten 2008b) and the translators might have been indigenous Aramaic speakers from Egypt. This point is further corroborated by the use of military terms, suggesting that the authors were soldiers and thus mercenaries based in Egypt. The proposal that they were soldiers is tentative, and is not germane to the main argument that the linguistic evidence suggests a particular setting and moves us away from certain theories of grand origins for the Septuagint. Taking Joosten's lead, we shall delineate here certain lines of evidence that need to be examined in order to place the Greek

[30] For the interlinear theory and the questions it raises for Septuagint origins, see Carleton Paget in this volume.

[31] Rajak 2009; Rajak 2011. So too Léonas 2005, 249.

[32] Her dismissal of James Barr (Rajak 2009, 165) is premature, and she does not resolve the linguistic problems that he raised (e.g., on ἅγιος and cognates, 165–6).

[33] Rajak 2009, 154–6; Rajak 2011, 155, 158–9, 280–4.

[34] E.g., van der Kooij 1999.

[35] Fernández Marcos 2009b.

[36] Joosten 2006; cf. Joosten 2007.

within a socio-linguistic context and offer explanations for the reasons for such diversity of opinion.

The eclectic Greek of the Septuagint

From the outset the importance of the Septuagint as a translation should be recognized. Although the translation is regularly referred to as a unique literary event,[37] the characteristics noted are similar to those found in other translations of the time.[38] Interference from the source text, involving adherence to word order, transliterations, semantic extension and modelling of idiom from the source language are all represented in translations in Egypt[39] and elsewhere.[40] We should not dismiss such evidence as late and unable to throw light on earlier translation method.[41] However we might view the biblical text, whether literary or legal in nature, the methods of translation in the Septuagint did not differ radically from documentary translation. Therefore, too high an emphasis should not be placed on the translation style alone, but attention should be given to other features of the language that might indicate a social setting.

It is undeniable that for the most part the Greek of the Septuagint reflects the contemporary Koine of the Hellenistic era (post-classical Greek). This has been so well documented since the time of Deissmann, and especially in the work of Lee, that it need not detain us. Rather, I would like to draw out two seemingly contradictory features that account for some of the debate today: typical documentary language and identifiable 'literary' language.

Features are found at times in the Septuagint that are typical of 'chancery' Greek, that is to say Greek expressions used in documentary sources. This has already been noted in the use of the vernacular, so well attested in the papyri, but it can also be seen in the employment of particular idioms too. An illustrative example is the regular rendering of the Hebrew ועתה by the Greek pairing *νῦν οὖν*. The Greek expression appears twenty-eight times in the Greek Pentateuch, of which an impressive nineteen are in Genesis, all rendering ועתה (or עתה in the MT of Gen. 19:9). For example,

[37] Cf. Brock 1972, 11; Rajak 2009, 1. [38] See, e.g., Peremans 1985, noted by Rajak 2009, 138.
[39] Mairs and Martin 2008–9. [40] Cooley 2009, 26–30.
[41] The Archive of the Theban Choachytes (P.Choach.Survey) is closer in time to the LXX, from the late second century BCE (Pestman 1993), and preserves a number of translations, two with the Demotic extant (P.Choach.Survey 12 and 17). Brock 1972, 17–18, only recognizes extant translations from Greek into Demotic.

> εἶπαν δέ Ἀπόστα ἐκεῖ. εἷς ἦλθες παροικεῖν· μὴ καὶ κρίσιν κρίνειν; *νῦν οὖν* σὲ κακώσομεν μᾶλλον ἢ ἐκείνους. (Gen. 19:9)

> They said, stand aside there. You came as one to settle. Surely you are not also judging? Now then we will mistreat you more than them.

While it is a possible rendering of the Hebrew we would expect something such as καὶ *νῦν* (found thirty-one times in the Pentateuch, ten of which in Genesis), or *νῦν* δέ (three times in Pentateuch, but more frequent elsewhere in the Septuagint). The simple explanation for what could be seen as a distinctive translation is that it is a feature of Greek of the time, whether spoken or used when recording decisions in papyri.[42] Thus, from the same time period (253 BCE) we have in the Zenon archive the famous complaint of the female owner of a beer shop, whose daughter has been taken off by a vine-dresser. Explaining that her daughter had helped her to manage the beer shop, she laments (P.Lond. 7.1976, lines 14–17):

> *νῦν* οὖν ζημίαν ποι|ῶ ταύτης ἐξελθούσης, καὶ |αὐτὴ δὲ τὰ δέοντα οὐκ ἔ|χω.

> Now therefore, since she has gone off, I am making a loss, and I do not even have the daily necessities.

Or in another one, also from the third-century BCE Zenon archive, a request to Zenon from the gardeners (P.Cair.Zen. 5.59838, lines 5–6; reprinted from *PSI* 6.586), the latter plead:

> *νῦν* οὖν ἐπίσκεψαι | περὶ ἡμῶν ὅπως ἂν κ[- -] ἀνεγκλήτως ἔργα.

> Now therefore take care of us, so that we can [complete] our work without complaint.

νῦν οὖν appears to be a natural Greek idiom found particularly in documentary sources, its popularity indicating that it was part of the curriculum in the scribal schools of Egypt. This conclusion is strengthened by comparison with a similar combination, *νῦν* γάρ, only attested twice in the Septuagint (Gen. 22:12; Exod. 9:15) and yet frequent in classical literature. That it was favoured as a literary expression is indicated by its single appearance in documentary papyri (BGU 16.2619) between the third century BCE and first century CE. The combination resurfaces in second- to third-century CE papyri, perhaps under the influence of Atticism.

'Literary' language is not easy to define, and a better term might be educated Greek.[43] Identification of such educated Greek offers a counterpoint

[42] A rare literary example is at Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.5.14 (though in direct speech).

[43] Suggested to me by John Lee, and used by him in his Grinfield lectures in Oxford, 2011–12.

to the presence of everyday language in the translation, and highlights one of the apparent contradictions in the Greek. For Joosten it is inconceivable that the translators studied classical writers, and he dismisses a recent listing of literary vocabulary (Casevitz 2001), as if the translators were 'literary geniuses who read Pindar and Aeschylus every day'.[44] Evans (1999) by contrast has shown that the one explanation for the frequent use of a rare optative cannot be explained by factors other than the knowledge of Homer.[45] The difficulty in Joosten's position is the drawing of a sharp distinction between literary Greek and the popular Greek of the Septuagint, a point long recognized by Deissmann (quoted above). The translators were not merely bilingual speakers or Jews with some knowledge of Greek, but literate enough to write in Greek. In antiquity the one educational method for learning to write was the memorization and copying out of classical authors, including Homer. They could not have learnt by any other means, even if the level of education attained varied according to class and financial means,[46] and the higher levels of Greek education (specifically rhetoric) were not essential for a mastery in writing Greek to a competent level. It is therefore possible that they used words known from classical literature.

Casevitz focused on words found in literature,[47] but unless the use is exclusive to literary works this can indicate no more than that a word is in use in the language. Rather, we need to delineate words that are distinctive to poetic or literary texts or reflecting a particular Homeric form of a word. In some cases they still might occasionally be found in prose writers, but the predominant use in poetry is a sign that those prose writers are themselves seeking literary embellishment through their choice. The lack of frequency of words in documentary papyri or in other words in everyday use can be an important indicator for educated Greek. We can already see some examples in the passage from Exodus 6 with which we began. The groaning of the Israelites is described as a στεναγμός (6:5), a noun common in epic and tragedy and derivative of the verb στενάχω, a poetic lengthened form of στένω. The choice of βραχίων for God's outstretched arm (6:6) is not as distinctive but is a word common in poetry, including, in a usage similar to the biblical, as a symbol of strength (Euripides, *Suppl.* 478).

A distinctly Homeric form attested in the Septuagint is νιφετός 'snowfall' (Deut. 32:2), notably in parallelism with ὄμβρος 'thunder-storm', a

[44] Joosten 2006, 352; cf. Joosten 2011, 3. [45] Joosten also does not accept this as likely.
[46] Cf. the study of Cribiore 2001. [47] Casevitz 2001.

pairing found in Homer (e.g., *Il.* 10.7; *Od.* 4.566) and rarely elsewhere.[48] Homeric and poetic are πόντος 'sea' (Exod. 15:5) and καταποντίζω 'to plunge or drown in the sea' (Exod. 15:4), and primarily poetic are στρωμνή 'bed' (Gen. 49:4) and σκύμνος 'cub' (Gen. 49:9). In addition to lexical choice it is possible that at times morphology is modelled on Homeric forms.[49] It has been noted that the formlessness and void of Gen. 1:2 has been translated by the euphonic pairing ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος, which could also be metrical.[50] The preference for words beginning with alpha-privative and ending with the adjectival -τος could be a reflection of these forms from Homer and beloved of the Alexandrian poets (cf. the Homeric ἀδήριτος, ἀθέσφατος, etc.).

It happens that many of the best examples of poetic usage come from passages that are most likely poetic in the Hebrew source. Thus, in Gen. 49:26 blessings of the parents are said to be greater than the blessings of the 'ever-flowing hills' (θινῶν ἀενάων). The noun θίς with the meaning 'mound' is attested in Homer and the poets, while its other more frequent use as 'sand' or 'shore', probably derived by reference to a sand-pile or sand-bank, appears both in Homer and in later writers. The translator has chosen a word in its more restricted sense, one that could have been familiar from the popular passage on the Sirens (Homer, *Od.* 12.45). Remarkably, the adjective chosen is not the expected αἰώνιος 'ever-lasting, ancient' for the Hebrew עוֹלָם, but the term found in lyric, ἀέναος 'ever-flowing'. This adds a further poetic dimension to the blessing. Corroborating evidence that ἀέναος was known and favoured as a poetic term at the time of the translator is seen in its appearance in Theocritus (*Id.* 15.102, in reference to the river Acheron). The sense, however, of 'ever-flowing' (a meaning known in Wis. 11:6) would seem inappropriate as a descriptor of hills, and given the Hebrew equivalence and the parallelism with μόνιμος 'stable', we should interpret it as 'ever-lasting'.[51] The sense of 'enduring' for the adjective does appear in some authors, but mostly in later writers and rarely in the finest poetry.[52] The translator has thus opted for a poetic form, but has chosen to use it in a sense that would be thought inappropriate for more accomplished writers. It is likely that the Genesis translator influenced other translators who applied it to hills (Bar. 5:7; Deut. 33:15, with reference to βουνός). It is striking that it is the more accomplished Jewish–Greek writer who uses it in the literary sense

[48] See on this Aitken 2011b, 513.
[49] Risch 1974, 19–21, 22–3; cf. Lightfoot 2007, 172, for examples in the Sibylline oracles.
[50] Aitken 2011b, 507. [51] *NETS* renders as 'everlasting dunes'. [52] See *DGE* I: 60.

(of a ποταμός, Wis. 11:6), as does the Alexandrian Theocritus. In this one phrase then, we have evidence of a translator striving for poetic flourishes and yet not quite meeting the standard of the best of authors.

Another example of a translation where the aim has been to produce educated Greek is in the inclusion of particles.[53] The occasional appearance of particles that are in decline in the language of the time is in itself an important indicator that the translators were aware of the higher literary level conveyed by such particles. In a similar manner to scribes in papyri including particles, sometimes as an afterthought in a supralinear correction, we find the infrequent inclusion of a particle in the Greek Pentateuch. In one case in the Septuagint the attempt appears to be mistaken, but the very infelicity reveals the desire for literary embellishment. The translator of Exodus is usually accomplished in his rendering into Greek, but in one verse writes what appears to be odd by the standards of normal Greek usage:

> εἶπα δέ σοι Ἐξαπόστειλον τὸν λαόν μου, ἵνα μοι λατρεύσῃ· εἰμὲν οὖν μὴ βούλει ἐξαποστεῖλαι αὐτούς, ὅρα οὖν ἐγὼ ἀποκτενῶ τὸν υἱόν σου τὸν πρωτότοκον (Exod. 4:23)
>
> I said to you, 'Send out my people, to serve me. If then you do not wish to send them out, see then I shall kill your first-born son.'

The protasis and apodosis both contain οὖν, one emphasizing the conditional εἰ, the second resuming the conditional of the protasis. The two cases of οὖν together appear heavy, and no equivalent in Greek is known. The translator could be said to have justifiably introduced the second οὖν appropriately, but when οὖν has already been used earlier in a fixed expression the result is inelegant. This may be compared to a third-century (dated 257 BCE) papyrus letter (P.Cair.Zen. 1.59034) where the scribe first wrote a perfectly acceptable prohibition, but then decided to add above the line σὺ οὖν:

> \σὺ οὖν/ μὴ καταπλαγῆις … τὸ ἀνήλωμα (line 21)
>
> Don't therefore be concerned about the expense …

In the manner of this Egyptian Greek scribe, the translator of Exodus also thought the addition of οὖν would convey an educated flavour, although he was less successful in his attempt.

This sampling of literary forms and of attempts, successful or not, to write educated Greek is matched by the use of rhetorical features and

[53] See Aitken 2013.

occasional metrical devices in the translation.[54] In no case is it consistent, and just as the rhetoric is sporadic so too educated words are mixed with day-to-day vernacular. In that sense the language can be called eclectic, a fitting description for much of Koine literature. We have to be alive to the possibility nonetheless that words considered by us and the later Atticists as non-literary were not seen as such by third-century BCE writers. Where does this leave us in the search for the identity of the translators?

The social setting of the translators

The eclectic nature of the Greek is not as unusual as it may seem. The use of the vernacular along with certain idioms (here demonstrated by *νῦν οὖν*) is typical of the language of daily commerce and reflected in a range of documentary papyri from Egypt. The moments of refinement do not contradict this, but are in fact traces of an educated scribe, even if not educated to the level of an Alexandrian poet. Rather we see in the documentary papyri from Egypt, sometimes in the midst of a rather prosaic letter, a literary embellishment, a rhetorical device and even sometimes a Homeric usage.[55] Scribes trained for administration would take the opportunity to display their education, to show off what they had learnt, and perhaps even earn a few extra obols by feigning high accomplishment in Greek. Occasionally they would even insert a Greek particle, in the manner of the sudden variation in the Septuagint between καί and δέ.[56] They were proficient nonetheless in Greek, and yet in their particular roles as town clerks and scribes the authors of documentary papyri did not require advanced levels of education or the compositional skills of the very best of writers. The Septuagint translators are comparable to the more skilled of these Egyptian bureaucratic scribes, displaying no evidence of having achieved the highest level of education, but having acquired enough rhetorical skills and learned enough of classical literary vocabulary to use it in their work.

It is possible, then, that in looking for a translator in the context of Ptolemaic Egypt, the most likely place to find one is among the scribal class of the Ptolemaic bureaucracy. As noted above, the translation style of the Septuagint is comparable to that of other ancient translations, accounting for many of the features seen in the Greek. The translators are probably adopting a translation style that is consistent with the daily translation needs in Egypt. As the analysis of the language also confirms,

[54] Aitken 2011b. [55] See further Aitken 2011b, 516–19. [56] Cf. Evans 2012.

it would seem best to place the translators within the scribal class of Egypt, who were writing documentary papyri and producing translations of documentary texts. It is among such a group that the Jews would likely have learnt their craft, when working as a scribe, trained in Greek, was one of the more financially rewarding occupations within the Ptolemaic administration.[57] Indeed we have evidence of Jews doing such a thing, namely gaining social preferment through learning Greek. The salt-tax papyri record Jewish names that are classed as *Hellenes*, indicating early on in the mid-third century Jews learning Greek.[58]

If this is the most reasonable setting for the Jewish translators, it does not give us any direct evidence of class, wealth or status, since those involved in the administration were diverse, and their status and wealth depended on the level of their skills; those most accomplished would have been sought out. Instead, what we see is that their identity was very much as a Hellene, participating in the world of Ptolemaic Egypt in a similar manner to native Egyptians. Jewish inscriptions in Greek testify, again from early on in the Ptolemaic era, to Jews expressing their identity in Greek, and participating in that social arena. The earliest inscriptions, from the time of Ptolemy III (246–221 BCE) (*JIGRE* 22 and 117) show Jews seeking royal patronage from the Ptolemy and publicly displaying their status in Greek.

It can be said then that the translation fits into the scribal world of Egypt, a world where the Greek language offered political and social advantages. The translators use the vocabulary of the time, follow the translation methods for Demotic translations into Greek, and adopt scribal practices seen in the documentary texts, including the literary embellishments of the scribes at the time. In this regard, the Greek of the translation might better be described as Ptolemaic rather than Jewish. It would be a mistake to derive too much about the social position or identity of the translators from this evidence. It does nonetheless offer hints at aspects of their lifestyles. It presents them as sufficiently integrated into Egyptian society to learn the craft of Greek-writing scribes (many of whom would have been Egyptian rather than Greeks themselves) and thereby gain some prestige and status within society. It is uninformative about whether working as a scribe was their main trade or, even if they did function as a scribe, whether they were wealthy or successful. It does suggest a different picture, though, from that of earlier views of an excluded group using a distinctive dialect, or even of Jews of a lower educational level.

[57] Cf. Thompson 1997, 73–5. [58] Clarysse and Thompson 2006; Aitken 2011a, 99.

It is an irony that even if the Septuagint was written in the Greek of Ptolemaic Egypt, the translation established terms and vocabulary that would be adopted by Jews and become distinctive of a Jewish–Greek sociolect.[59] Along with the vocabulary, the translation style itself became representative of a literary trope that was imitated by otherwise accomplished literary Jewish authors such as Ezekiel the Tragedian and Wisdom of Solomon, who combined sophisticated Greek with Septuagint-like syntax and vocabulary. The Ptolemaic Greek of the Septuagint became Jewish–Greek only upon its reception and absorption into Jewish tradition.

59 See de Lange 2007c.

CHAPTER 9

Afterlives of the Septuagint
A Christian witness to the Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism

Cameron Boyd-Taylor

Both Jewish legend and modern scholarship concur that the five books of Moses were translated from Hebrew into Greek in Egypt sometime in the early third century BCE. It is a much storied translation. At an early point in its reception history, its origins were linked to the Royal Library in Alexandria, for which it was said to have been commissioned by Ptolemy II Philadelphus (283–246 BCE).[1] According to the same tradition seventy-two translators were dispatched from Jerusalem by the high priest at royal bidding.[2] Current scholarship adopts a more prosaic view. Not a Torah for King Ptolemy, but a Pentateuch for Greek-speaking Jews, a one-time effort by five translators.[3] Over the next two centuries further translations were produced; again, one-time efforts it would seem. The growth and extent of this literature, while subject to its own peculiar contingencies, was likely derivative of the historical forces which were then shaping the Hebrew Bible. Much of that corpus had already been translated into Greek by about 130 BCE, when the grandson of Ben Sira wrote his prologue. We are not to imagine a coordinated undertaking; rather, the evidence would suggest diversity in provenance as well as method.[4] The result, by the first century CE, was a heterogeneous corpus of Jewish sacred literature in Greek, a collection of books roughly coextensive to what was later known in the Latin west as the *Interpretatio septuaginta virorum* or simply *Septuaginta*.[5]

If the Jewish reception of this literature is a story yet to be told, this is due in part to the myth of rejection, according to which disagreement

[1] See *Aristeas* 9–11, and Aristobulus, in Eusebius, *Praep. Ev*. 13.12.1–2. Cf. Philo, *Mos*. 2.31–2, and Josephus, *Ant*. 12.12–27.

[2] *Aristeas* 307. Cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 12.56–7.

[3] Tov 2010b, 16.

[4] See Tov 2010b, 16–19. Gentry 2008, 302, notes that by the first century CE some translations had already undergone revision.

[5] Swete 1900, 9. Notwithstanding the fact that the Septuagint was shaped in part by developments internal to Christianity, one need not deny the pre-Christian currency of a collection something like it. See Horbury 1998, 30.

with Christians over the biblical text prompted Jews to produce revised Greek translations which more accurately represented the Hebrew text, leading to the abandonment of the Septuagint by the second century CE.[6] The new versions were in turn discarded as a result of the promotion of the Hebrew language subsequent to the revolt of 132–5 CE, and the gradual rabbinization of Palestinian society. This explanation, never satisfactory, is now untenable.[7] Manuscript discoveries over the last century have changed the way specialists view the Jewish reception of Greek biblical versions. Use of the Septuagint is attested well into the post-Tannaitic period;[8] yet even before the first century CE certain books had undergone extensive revision, and ultimately these recensions would prevail. Though the evidence is fragmentary and widely dispersed, we are now in a position to trace a continuous history of Jewish reception extending from Ptolemaic Alexandria through to the fall of Constantinople.[9]

As Nicholas de Lange has observed, Christian witnesses play a key role in piecing together this history.[10] Origen's Hexapla, completed by about 243 CE,[11] is an indispensible witness to Jewish reception during the Tannaitic period, which saw at least two Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, the eponymous versions of Aquila and Symmachus. Origen included both of these texts in his synopsis, together with the Septuagint, and a version attributed to a certain Theodotion, a Jewish recension with roots in the late Hellenistic period. Further translations were added for some books. Glosses from these versions (the so-called hexaplaric readings) made their way into biblical commentaries, from there into catenae texts, and thence into ecclesiastical manuscripts. Amidst the flotsam and jetsam of the Hexapla there is sufficient material to characterize Origen's Jewish sources in some detail.[12]

Beyond the Tannaitic period, our knowledge of Jewish reception history rests largely on a small corpus of highly fragmentary texts, most of which were recovered from the Cairo Genizah. If a synthesis is possible, this is in no small measure owing to the work of de Lange, to whom we are all indebted.[13] Yet precious though they are, the manuscripts edited by de Lange give us but a glimpse of the use of Greek versions in Byzantine

[6] A strong case has been made by Gilles Dorival, who maintains that Jewish use of the Septuagint was virtually eliminated by 130 CE. See Dorival, Harl and Munnich 1988, 120–2. Cf. Boyd-Taylor 2010.

[7] Fernández Marcos 2009a, 41–2.

[8] The manuscript evidence is presented (with a focus on Jewish scribal practice) in Kraft 2003.

[9] Fernández Marcos 2009a, 43. [10] De Lange 2009a, 3. [11] Van Seters 2006, 84.

[12] Gentry 2008, 304–5, warns that many of the issues raised by the Hexapla fragments have yet to be resolved.

[13] See de Lange 1996a. See more recently de Lange 2010 and de Lange 2012.

Judaism. It has become increasingly evident, however, that this evidence may be supplemented by Christian witnesses. On the margins of certain manuscripts of the Septuagint are glosses from Hebrew–Greek translations transmitted independently of Origen's Hexapla, some of which are very likely of Byzantine Jewish provenance. My intention here is to contribute to the ongoing work of evaluating the textual character of this material by analysing a representative sample of readings.

Fragments of a medieval Jewish version

When Constantine the Great (306–37) transferred the imperial capital from Rome to the city of Byzantium in 330 CE the Greek Scriptures still figured prominently in Jewish life, not only in the diaspora, but also in Palestinian centres such as Caesarea where the use of Greek co-existed with Aramaic and Hebrew. This state of affairs likely persisted wherever Greek continued to serve as a first language for Jews.[14] If there are indications of a growing preference for Aquila,[15] there is still no reason to assume that the textual plurality of the third century yielded to the hegemony of a single version. An edict issued by the Byzantine emperor Justinian in 553 CE authorizing the use of Greek versions by his Jewish subjects explicitly acknowledges both Aquila's version as well as the Septuagint.[16] What happened after the time of Justinian, however, remains somewhat uncertain.[17] Fernández Marcos envisions a number of Hebrew–Greek translations in circulation during this period.[18] He goes on to suggest that fragments of one such version, referred to by Christian scribes as τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν, made their way into the margins of Septuagint manuscripts. The prospect of recovering a lost Jewish version thus presents itself. Given the dearth of extant sources for the Middle Ages, this would be of considerable historical significance.

[14] See de Lange 1999b, 148.

[15] Jerome, *Comm. Ezech.* 3.5; Augustine, *Civ.* 15. See de Lange 1976, 15. Fernández Marcos 2000, 112–13, has suggested that the destiny of Aquila's version was linked with that of the Greek language in the Near East: it only became irrelevant as a result of the disappearance of Greek as the *lingua franca*.

[16] Justinian, *Novella* 146. The secondary literature is extensive. See de Lange 2010, 42–4. Recent studies include Rutgers 2003 and Veltri 1994.

[17] That Jews continued to use Greek versions is not in doubt; nevertheless, as de Lange 1999b, 150, observes, the inscriptional evidence would suggest that by the sixth century Greek had yielded to Hebrew as a liturgical language. Had Greek scriptures been displaced to an ancillary role by this time, perhaps as an oral targum, the character of the text would have changed accordingly, including a high degree of textual fluidity. This is confirmed to some extent by the manuscript evidence (de Lange 2010, 51).

[18] Fernández Marcos 2000, 176.

Two Christian manuscripts, Mailand, Bibl. Ambr., S.P. 51[19] (Codex Ambrosianus) and Paris, Bibl. Nat., Gr. 3[20] (Ra 56), each contain two marginal glosses attributed to a source identified as τὸ ἰουδ[αϊκόν. The textual and philological character of the four τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν readings is consistent with the hypothesis of a Jewish source independent of the Hexapla and post-dating the Tannaitic period.[21] De Lange has suggested that use of the term τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν implies a written source, probably one in Greek letters.[22] That a distinct medieval version or recension of the Greek Pentateuch underlies the reference to τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν is certainly possible. While four glosses are not much to go on, there are other variants that presumably share the same provenance. In this respect, Codex Ambrosianus (F) is particularly promising. In the course of the eleventh century CE the manuscript was repaired by an instaurator, who introduced a significant body of marginalia (F^b), including the two τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν variants. The glosses of F^b have aroused considerable interest due to their linguistic character and textual affiliation, and have figured prominently in attempts to chart the path of Jewish reception after Justinian.

In an article published in 1924, David S. Blondheim demonstrated not only the continuing use of Greek translations by Jews in the Middle Ages, but also the persistent influence of the ancient versions.[23] Included in Blondheim's survey were the glosses of F^b, which, he believed, represented an intermediate stage in the medieval Jewish tradition underlying the Constantinopolitan Pentateuch (CP), a Jewish–Greek version written in Hebrew characters and printed in 1547.[24] Blondheim's pioneering work was brought to the attention of the wider scholarly community by

[19] Codex Ambrosianus is a fifth century uncial manuscript housed in the Ambrosian Library in Milan, containing Gen. 31:15 through Josh. 12:12 with many lacunae. The correctors of F are distinguished on the basis of their script: those appearing in a small uncial script are collectively designated F^a, while those in a cursive hand (or hands) are grouped together as F^b. See Ceriani 1864.

[20] Ra. 56 is a cursive manuscript (360 fol.) located in La Bibliothèque nationale de France containing: (1 ff.) Octateuch; (227 ff.) 1–4 Kingdoms; (319 ff.) 1–2 Chronicles 13:15; (346 ff.) 1 Macc. 1–16:10; 2 Macc. 5:10–7:6, with hexaplaric notes and other marginalia. The manuscript is dated 1096. See Lucà 2012, 489.

[21] Boyd-Taylor forthcoming.

[22] See de Lange 2012, 381. De Lange 2010, 52, proposes an approximate *terminus post quem* of about 600, since the use of Greek letters by Jews after that time is rare, and it may be presumed that Christian scribes could not read Hebrew letters. A *terminus ante quem* of around 300 CE is, I believe, defensible on philological grounds.

[23] Blondheim 1924, 1–14. His evidence included: (1) the fragment of a Greek translation of Ecclesiastes in Hebrew characters (tenth–twelfth century); (2) a translation of Jonah preserved in two manuscripts (fourteenth–fifteenth century) in Hebrew characters; (3) Codex Marcianus gr. 7 (*Graecus Venetus*, fourteenth century), which contains a medieval Greek version of the Pentateuch, Proverbs, Ruth, Song, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations and Daniel; (4) the Constantinopolitan Pentateuch.

[24] Blondheim 1924, 5.

Fernández Marcos, who in his *Introducción* devoted a chapter to Jewish versions in Medieval Greek.[25] Further evidence was not long in appearing. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s de Lange had been working independently on Greek–Jewish texts from the Cairo Genizah, producing a series of studies culminating in his edition of 1996.[26] The manuscripts, dated to the tenth–twelfth centuries, include Hebrew commentaries, glossaries and scholia in which Greek glosses occur. De Lange noted lexical agreements between these glosses and F^b which, he concluded, were beyond mere coincidence.[27] Meanwhile Wevers documented the relationship between F^b and CP for his critical edition of Greek Exodus (1991), confirming Blondheim's characterization of the material.[28] When Fernández Marcos published a revised edition of his *Introducción* in 1998 (English translation 2000), he was able to take into account the textual analysis of Wevers and the newly discovered materials published by de Lange. He located F^b within a continuous chain of Jewish translations into Greek, extending from antiquity through to the early modern period.[29]

When de Lange secured funding for a three-year research project, the Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism (GBBJ), to gather the manuscript evidence for the use of Greek versions by medieval Jews,[30] the issue whether to include the glosses of F^b in the corpus arose, owing primarily to the textual heterogeneity of the material. In itself such heterogeneity is not inconsistent with medieval Jewish provenance, as one might expect some degree of continuity with earlier tradition, and there is persuasive evidence that the Three were still known to Greek-speaking Jews in the Middle Ages.[31] Nevertheless glosses from these versions were also widely disseminated amongst learned Christians, and, given that the scribes responsible for F^b were undoubtedly Christian, the burden of proof falls accordingly. That they drew on various strands of tradition, both Jewish and Christian, is not implausible. In the end it was decided to include a selection of

[25] Fernández Marcos 1979, 162.

[26] De Lange 1980; 1982; 1993; 1995a; 1995b; 1996a. See also de Lange 1999a and 2003.

[27] De Lange 2012, 381. Boyd-Taylor 2008, documents five agreements between F^b and two Jewish manuscripts: Fitzwillam Museum 364* (eleventh–twelfth century), an annotated manuscript of the Former Prophets in Hebrew with Greek marginal glosses in Hebrew characters; and T-S C6.117 + Westminster College, Talmudica I.110 (tenth–twelfth century), a series of exegetical and philological notes on Genesis and Exodus in Hebrew with Greek glosses.

[28] Wevers 1991, 43–4.

[29] Fernández Marcos 2000, 175–7. See also Fernández Marcos 2009a, 46–7.

[30] For a description of the project see de Lange 2008. The bulk of the corpus consists of fragmentary manuscripts recovered from the Cairo Genizah.

[31] See de Lange 1995b, and Blondheim 1924, 1–14. The impact of Aquila is evident, but traces of the Septuagint appear as well. See Boyd-Taylor 2010, 282–8.

demonstrably late readings from Exodus in the GBBJ corpus. The remainder of the variants still hang in the balance. As Salvesen indicates, any chance of resolving the issue rests on a detailed study of all the F^{b} notes – not only an outstanding issue for the GBBJ project, but a *desideratum* for the study of Jewish reception history.[32]

Towards a textual profile of F^{b}

If our aim is to determine the provenance of F^{b}, we must proceed variant by variant, attempting to locate each relative to the textual history of the Septuagint. To obtain a tentative profile of the material I have analysed a representative sample of variants from the Göttingen edition of Greek Deuteronomy ($\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$),[33] comprised of ninety-nine readings, according to the following typology: (i) textual variants; (ii) hexaplaric readings; (iii) cognate glosses; (iv) independent glosses.[34] I shall proceed on the methodological principle that textual variation within the Septuagint tradition is typically due to factors internal to the transmission of the text, and that independence must be demonstrated.

Textual variants

The majority of the readings (78 per cent) may be classified as textual variants of the Septuagint, which is to say, they are explicable within its transmission history.[35] Unless otherwise noted, such readings are attested elsewhere in the tradition. Some are undoubtedly original. In such cases the text of F (the lemma) is secondary, while the F^{b} variant concurs with $\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$. As to the secondary variants, they are not, as a rule, recensional. They frequently presuppose the Greek text over against the Hebrew, which underscores the fact that, notwithstanding the recensional character of many of its readings, F^{b} was not cut from whole cloth.

[32] Salvesen 2009, 127.

[33] My sample comprises the variants cited in Wevers 1977, for the first chapter as well as every third chapter thereafter. F is extant for Deut. 1:1 through 28:63 ηὐφράν[θη], and 29:14 καὶ τὴν ἀράν through to the book's end, hence the lacunae do not affect the sampling. I shall used the normalized form of each gloss, and limit my discussion to identifiable lexemes and significant orthographic variants.

[34] Cf. the typology adapted by Boyd-Taylor forthcoming from Fernández Marcos 2000, 176.

[35] Following the precedent of Wevers 1977, primary readings are orthographically normalized, while secondary readings within the tradition are given without diacritics. Hexaplaric notes are fully normalized.

Nearly half of the textual variants involve orthography.[36] Three forms in particular were subject to correction: F^b regularly restores τεσσαρακοστός (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$), where the lemma has the later form τεσσερακοστος;[37] F^b gives λαμβάνω without the μ infix for the aorist and future over against F and $\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$, again in accordance with classical usage;[38] on the other hand, it consistently reads εξολοθρευω, a late form, for ἐξολεθρεύω (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$).[39] One variant that stands somewhat apart from the tradition is at Deut. 3:17, where F^b reads τοῦ ἅλατ[ος] *of salt*, for (θαλάσσης) ἁλυκῆς (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$), (*sea*) *of salt*, rendering Hebrew (ים)המלח. The use of the arthrous neuter singular of ἅλας, though hardly exceptional in this context, is unexpected, as the plural of the feminine form ἅλς tended to be used.[40]

With respect to morphology F^b has a decided preference for the use of thematic endings in second aorist verbs.[41] This preference would normally be attributed to a classicizing tendency, though the corrections here involve second person forms exclusively, and may thus reflect Byzantine convention.[42]

Eleven textual variants pertain to case and number. Some are straightforward corrections. At Deut. 1:25 F^b reads ἡμῖν (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) for the lemma ημων, which is unique to F and attributable to dittography. At 12:21 F^b reads ταῖς (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) for τοις (πόλεσιν), a misreading again unique to F.[43] Sometimes F^b revises the work of an earlier corrector: at 1:10 the second person ὑμῶν (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) is restored where an early uncial corrector (F^a) had introduced ημων (an itacism) for the lemma ὑμῶν; at 12:9 F^b reads the

[36] Other variants in this sub-class include restoring οὐχ (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) for οὐκ at Deut. 21:3; as well as two later forms: επετιον (*sic*, cf. ἐπέτειος) for ἐφέτειον (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) at 15:18; and αενναων for ἀενάων (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) at 33:15.

[37] Deut. 1:3; 9:9 *bis*, 11 *bis*, 18, 25 *bis*. Though the form τεσσερ- has a precedent in the Ionic dialect, it is not widely attested until the common era. Its appearance in later manuscripts of the Septuagint is likely due to avoidance of the sequence ε-α-α by copyists. See LSJ 1940, τέσσαρες.

[38] Deut. 15:17; 21:3; 30:4, 12, 13.

[39] Deut. 3:6; 6:15; 9:3, 5, 8, 14, 19, 20, 25, 26; 12:29, 30; 18:12; 33:19. See Wevers 1995, 52. ἐξολοθρεύω is a late form created by progressive assimilation.

[40] There is no lexical difference. See Wevers 1997, 21. At Gen. 14:3 the Hebrew phrase is rendered ἡ θάλασσα τῶν ἁλῶν ($\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$). The word ἅλς is used at Lev. 2:13. This precedent is followed at Josh. 12:3; 15:62; 18:19.

[41] At Deut. 9:7 F^b reads ἐξήλθετε (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) for εξηλθατε (both F^b and the lemma give a plural form over against $\mathfrak{M}$); at 1:20 ηλθετε for ἤλθατε (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$); at 1:22 προσηλθετε for προσήλθατε (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$), and ειπετε (here it stands alone amongst Greek witnesses) for εἴπατε (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$); and at 1:42 ειπε for an uncertain lemma ($\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$ reads εἰπόν).

[42] While athematic endings (α endings) were predominant in the Koine period, and eventually became the norm, the second person remained the exception, for which thematic endings continued to be used. Thematic endings for the second person plural (-ετε) were attested for some dialects as late as the early twentieth century, while their use for the second person singular (-ες) persists in modern Greek. See Joseph 2007, 697.

[43] At 27:6 both F^b and F give the common variant αυτου, where ἐπ᾽αὐτό ($\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) is original.

first person ημιν (over against 𝔐) where the corrector of the first hand had changed the lemma ὑμῶν (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) to ημων (a popular variant). It is worth noting that a number of corrections are at variance with 𝔐: at 9:2, for instance, F^{b} reads καὶ πολύν (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) for και πολυ (F), where the lemma is a Septuagint plus, and marked as such in the hexaplaric text.[44] In two cases, however, the change introduced by F^{b} may have arisen due to acquaintanceship with the Hebrew text. At 15:18 F^{b} (alone) reads εξαποστελλομενου αυτου ελευθερου for the lemma ἐξαποστελλομένων αὐτῶν ἐλευθέρων (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$). This could either represent a contextual adjustment, or an alignment to 𝔐, which is singular. Whether one judges it to be recensional will depend on the overall textual character of F^{b}. So too at 33:4 where F^{b} reads συναγωγης for συναγωγαῖς (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$). Whereas the Septuagint construed קהלת as a dative plural, the Masoretes vocalized it as a singular.[45] In this instance, however, the variant is probably phonetic, arising from a confusion of αι and η.

There are eight textual variants involving verbal form. Where F^{b} agrees in number with 𝔐, there may be a case for interference from the Hebrew, but it is more likely that the lemma has been corrected to a Greek exemplar. At Deut. 12:3, for instance, where the lemma reads the third person form κατακαυσεται, F^{b} reads the second person κατακαύσετε (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) in agreement with 𝔐, but also in agreement with the original Greek text. In the other two instances where F^{b} restores an original reading, correction to the Hebrew is ruled out.[46] Of the secondary variants, one involves the adjustment of a secondary reading in F away from both $\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$ and 𝔐.[47] Another appears to be contextually motivated: F^{b} stands alone in its reading of ημην for εἰμί (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) at 9:19, where the past tense is expected.[48] In the remaining cases the intralingual origin of the variant is generally apparent.[49]

[44] Wevers 1995, 157. See Deut. 3:3 where F^{b} gives the plural accusative αυτους for αὐτοῦ (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$), but the change in number does not accord with 𝔐; nor does the change in case at 12:18 where F^{b} reads αυτον for αὐτῷ (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$; cf. 𝔐 בו).

[45] Wevers 1995, 541.

[46] At Deut. 3:24 F^{b} reads the aorist ἤρξω (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$) for the perfect ηρξαι (F). Either form is possible for Greek Deuteronomy, but Wevers 1995, 63, considers the aorist original. F^{b} also restores the second person ἐνεχυράσεις (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$ and 𝔐) for ενεχυρας at Deut. 24:17.

[47] At Deut. 9:21 F^{b} corrects the lemma και κατηλασα to και κατηλεσα, where the original translator evidently rendered the Hebrew infinitive by the participle καταλέσας (G^{ed}). Wevers 1995, 168.

[48] Wevers 1995, 167.

[49] At Deut. 6:14 F^{b} corrects ου μη πορευησθε to ου μη πορευσησθε where the original reads οὐ πορεύσεσθε ($\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$). Wevers 1995, 121, suggests that the change to ου μη plus the subjunctive resulted from scribal uncertainty regarding the form of prohibitions. At 1:22 F^{b} reads αποστειλομεν, a form arising through scribal error, for ἀποστείλωμεν (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$); at 21:23 it repeats the lemma, the secondary reading μιανητε (F), where $\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$ has μιανεῖτε.

A single variant in the sample involves word order. At Deut. 1:18 F^b reads πάντας τοὺς λόγους (=𝔊^ed) for τους παντας λογους. As Wevers suggests, the wording of the lemma probably originated in a hexaplaric correction to the Hebrew; F^b has restored the original rendering.[50] Here then, it is the first hand of F that is under hexaplaric influence.

There are eight lexical variants. Whereas two almost undoubtedly involve scribal error,[51] the others may be attributable to contextual factors.[52] Thus at Deut. 18:2 F^b (alone) reads Λευί for αὐτῷ (=𝔊^ed), where the antecedent of the pronoun must be Levi.[53] A stylistic adjustment is evident at 30:16 where F^b has εαν ουν for ἐὰν δέ (=𝔊^ed). The lemma is a Septuagintal plus under the asterisk, indicating that the exemplar of the correction is not in this instance recensional. The original translator, it seems, introduced an antecedent (adapted from v. 10) for the Hebrew relative particle, but his use of δέ after ἐάν was problematic for some scribes.[54]

In seven cases the variant involves a plus or minus relative to the lemma. At Deut. 1:22 F^b reads μοι (=𝔊^ed) where it is lacking in F and Ra 54 (a thirteenth- to fourteenth-century cursive manuscript), but present in every other witness. The correction is in quantitative accord with the Hebrew (אלי), but this may be fortuitous. So too at 9:17 where F^b corrects the plus απο των χειρων μου (adapted from a preceding phrase in the same verse) to αὐτάς (=𝔊^ed); again, the correction is conceivably recensional, but given that it restores the original reading of the text, it probably reflects revision to a Greek exemplar. This is evident in two cases where F^b introduces the conjunction και over against both the lemma (=𝔊^ed) and 𝔐 (1:30; 24:8). An early correction at 3:13, where the secondary plus και was added, is revised by F^b in line with F (=𝔊^ed and

[50] Wevers 1995, 11.

[51] At Deut. 1:13 F^b reads αυτοις for ἑαυτοῖς (=𝔊^ed); at 33:11 it reads παταξον for κάταξον (=𝔊^ed).

[52] Difficult to classify is Deut. 12:6 where F^b (alone) reads θησετε, *you will put*, *place*, for οἴσετε (F =𝔊^ed), *you will bring*, where the reference is to the bringing of offerings to the chosen place (cf. והבאתם, 𝔐). Cf. Exod. 34:26 τὰ πρωτογενήματα τῆς γῆς σου θήσεις εἰς τὸν οἶκον κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου. The F^b reading might have arisen from reading omicron (Ο) as theta (Θ) and itacizing iota as eta/upsilon. Note that MS 392^mg here reads θυσετε for the lemma, which seems to be based on a similar mistake.

[53] Wevers 1995, 293.

[54] Wevers 1995, 486. See also Deut. 6:4 where F^b restores καὶ τὰ κρίματα (=𝔊^ed) where F reads κατα κριματα due to a copying error. More difficult to classify are the last two readings in this category. At 3:3 F^b (alone) reads σποριμον, *for sowing*, for σπέρμα (=𝔊^ed), *seed*, here in the sense *offspring*, and may be an inner-Greek (i.e. intralingual) gloss (cf. 𝔐, פָּעוֹר, *survivor*). See Gen. 1:29 where σπόριμον occurs as a plus modifying σπεῖρον σπέρμα (rendering the phrase זרע זרע). Another curious variant is found at Deut. 6:22 where F^b together with one other Greek witness (Ra 59, fifteenth-century cursive) reads φοβερα for πονηρά (=𝔊^ed). It must be an old reading as it is reflected in the Bohairic version, yet it admits no ready explanation, whether contextually, or by recourse to the Hebrew (cf. 𝔐, רעים).

𝔐). This might reflect internal adjustment of the text, a phenomenon seen elsewhere.[55]

Lastly, there are six F^b readings involving proper names. Wevers is quite right to point out that these names were not known to the copyists who inadvertently changed the vowels.[56] All else being equal, they are probably misspellings, and of no textual interest.[57]

Hexaplaric readings

Ten readings (10 per cent of the sample) are straightforwardly hexaplaric: either they resemble an attested hexaplaric plus, or else they are attributed to (or at least echo) one or other of the versions incorporated in the Hexapla (Aquila or α′; Symmachus or σ′; and Theodotion or θ′). It is, of course, conceivable that such variants were drawn from sources independent of Origen; whether this is likely will depend upon the overall textual character of F^b.

In three instances F^b agrees with the hexaplaric text. At Deut. 1:1 F^b reads και ανα μεσον τοφελ for Τόφολ (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$), which brings the Greek into accord with 𝔐 (ובין תפל), correcting a Septuagint minus. The correction is under the asterisk in hexaplaric witnesses which retain Origen's editorial marks.[58] Another such rendering occurs at 1:39 where F^b reads και τα παιδια υμων α ειπατε εν διαρπαγη εσεσθε at the beginning of the verse, which remedies a minus (F = $\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$), by rendering וטפכם אשר אמרתם לבז יהיה (𝔐). This reading is likewise under the asterisk.[59] Finally,

[55] At Deut. 12:28 F^b corrects the lemma which repeats καλόν at the beginning of a line; and at 3:17 F^b (alone) articulates Ἀραβά to mark its semantic relationship to the head-word, i.e. θαλάσσης τοῦ Ἀραβά, rendering ים הערבה.

[56] Wevers 1995, 2.

[57] F^b may, however, prove the exception in this regard. At Deut. 1:1 F^b reads τοφελ for Τόφολ, and λαβαν for Λοβόν (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$). The F^b variants approximate the Masoretic pointing of the names, תֹּפֶל and לָבָן respectively. Such interchanges between rounded characters are common, especially in names. The variants are, however, exceptional within the Septuagint tradition (the first occurs only in Ra 28, a tenth–eleventh century cursive manuscript; the second is unique to F^b). At the same time, both are attested in Latin sources with probable influence from the Hebrew: λαβαν in Isidore, and τοφελ in both Jerome and Isidore. These readings may well be fortuitous, but they bear further consideration, as the phenomenon is robust in F^b. At 3:29 F^b (alone) reads φεγωρ for Φογώρ (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$), which again seems to approximate the Masoretic pointing פְּעוֹר. Yet not every variation in proper names is explained by reference to the Hebrew. At 1:38, where F^b reads νουη for Ναυή (=$\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$), and the Masoretic pointing is נוּן, this is likely coincidental. Copying error accounts for the variant at 3:17, where F^b gives ιορβανη for ιορδανη (cf. $\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$, Ἰορδάνης); while at 33:2 F^b corrects the secondary reading σιναι, introduced by an early uncial corrector (F^a), to Σινά ($\mathfrak{G}^{ed}$).

[58] Wevers 1995, 2.

[59] Although attributed to α′ in the tradition, Wevers 1995, 23, suggests that it was derived from θ′, since α′ typically retains παιδίον for ילד.

at 3.24 F^b adds σου (=𝔐) to χεῖρα (=𝔊^ed), correcting a Septuagint minus. The rendering of the Hebrew suffix is attested for the hexaplaric text.[60]

Two hexaplaric readings, although unattributed by F^b, are attributed by other witnesses to one or other of the Three for the same lemma. At Deut. 1:24 F^b reads χειμάρρου for (ἕως) φάραγγος (=𝔊^ed), which translates נחל. The reading is also attested for α′. The rendering of the word נחל, *torrent* or *wadi*, by χείμαρρος, *torrent* or *ravine*, is common in the Septuagint, and the match is attested elsewhere for the Three.[61] At Deut. 12:2 F^b gives τῶν βουνῶν as a variant for τῶν θινῶν (=𝔊^ed), *dunes*, which is unexpected in this context, and a candidate for revision. The Hebrew word גבעה, *hill*, here in reference to a place of worship, is commonly matched with βουνός, *hill* or *mound*, in the ancient versions.[62]

The remainder of the hexaplaric variants represent Hebrew–Greek matches attributed to the Three elsewhere in the Septuagint. Thus at Deut. 1:7, F^b gives *νοτον* as a variant for (πρὸς) λίβα (=𝔊^ed). The lemma renders the phrase בנגב, here a reference to the Negev. The Hebrew word נגב often denotes the *southern quadrant*, and the translator has construed it as a compass direction. Yet while λίψ became a default match for נגב, its use in reference to the southern quadrant is not conventional, and so it tended to be replaced by a more idiomatic rendering.[63] The F^b match is widely attested for the Three, and occurs as a variant in the Septuagint tradition.[64] At Deut. 3:7, F^b reads λάφυρα, *spoils taken in war*, for σκῦλα (=𝔊^ed), which typically denotes *arms stripped off of a slain enemy*. The lemma has a narrower semantic range than its Hebrew counterpart שלל, *spoils*, *plunder* or *booty*, and was subject to revision. The F^b equivalence is attested elsewhere for the Three.[65] Lastly at Deut. 33:8 F^b reads φωτισμούς for δήλους (=𝔊^ed) which renders Hebrew ארים, *Urim*. The F^b match is widely attested for the Three.[66]

In two instances, F^b records what appears to be a variant of a hexaplaric reading. Thus at Deut. 3:5 F^b reads *ατειχων* for (τῶν) Φερεζαίων

[60] Wevers 1995, 63.

[61] See Lev. 23:40 (α′, σ′, θ′); Josh. 12:1 (σ′); 15:4 (α′); Job 22:24 (θ′), etc.

[62] See Gen. 49:26 (α′), Exod. 17:9 (α′, σ′, θ′), Judg. 7:1 (α′, σ′, θ′), etc. The match occurs frequently in the Septuagint.

[63] See Boyd-Taylor 2004.

[64] Gen. 12:9 (σ′); 13:1, 3 (σ′); Num. 34:3 (α′, σ′); Josh. 10:40 (α′, σ′); Isa. 30:6 (θ′, σ′) etc.

[65] See Gen. 49:27 (α′; cf. σ′); Num. 31:12 (α′, σ′, θ′); Deut. 20:14 (α′); Ps. 67:13 (𝔐 68:13) (α′, σ′), etc. Cf. Exod. 20:14 (𝔐 v. 30), where α′ renders שלל by ἀπαρτίαν, *spoil*. The F^b match also occurs once in the Septuagint (1 Chr. 26:27).

[66] See Exod. 28.26 (𝔐 28.30) (α′ σ′ θ′); Lev. 8.8 (α′ θ′); Num. 27:21 (α′ σ′ θ′), etc. Cf. Deut. 33:8 where τελειότης σου καὶ διδαχή σου (rendering the phrase ואוריך תמיך) is attributed to Symmachus by Procopius of Gaza (518–65 CE).

(=𝔊^ed^).[67] The gloss ἀτειχίστων, *unwalled*, is attributed to the Three in this context; the word occurs elsewhere in the Septuagint and is attested for Symmachus.[68] The adjective used by F^b^, ἀτειχός, *unwalled*, is a late (and rare) variant of ἀτείχιστος.[69] At Deut. 33:2 F^b^ reads αγιων for (σὺν μυριάσιν) Καδής (𝔊^ed^). Here the Greek lemma renders the Hebrew phrase אתה מרבבת קדש, construing the form קדש as a proper name (Qadesh), and transliterating it. The phrase is rendered ἀπὸ μυριάδων ἁγιασμοῦ by α′, thus construing קדש as a noun, *sanctification*, rather than as a place name. Wevers observes that the phrase, *myriads of holy ones* (taking ἁγιασμοῦ collectively) fits well as a parallel to the ἄγγελοι of line four.[70] The parallel is sharpened by σ′, which renders קדש by the more idiomatic ἁγίαις. The F^b^ gloss looks like a hybrid of the two readings, using the same match as σ′ (ἅγιος), as well as the plural number, but agreeing with α′ in its use of the genitive case.

Cognate glosses

Four of the readings in the sample (4 per cent) bear a family resemblance to the ancient versions, while exhibiting a certain degree of freedom in rendering the Hebrew. At Deut. 1:1, for instance, F^b^ reads εις το πεδιον for πρὸς δυσμαῖς, *bordering on the west* (=𝔊^ed^), which renders בערבה. The geographic modifiers in the Greek are a little puzzling, as Wevers notes.[71] Normally the Hebrew word ערבה is construed as a place name in Greek Deuteronomy and transliterated as Ἀραβά.[72] Here the original translator perhaps assimilated ערבה to the late Hebrew form, מערב, *west*. At 1:7 θ′ follows suit, rendering the phrase בערבה as ἐν δυσμαῖς; α′, however, translates the phrase ἐν ὁμαλεῖ, both here and at 1:7, taking the noun to refer to a plateau or plain.[73] The F^b^ gloss thus shares the interpretation of α′, and was very likely under its influence, since at 2:8 (outside of the sample) F^b^ reads ὁμαλήν for Ἀραβά.

At Deut. 1:12 F^b^ gives βασταγμα as a variant for ὑπόστασιν (=𝔊^ed^), *substance*, which renders the word משא, *load* or *burden*. The source is translated idiosyncratically in the original Greek, and the rendering was a

[67] Wevers 1995, 52. The lemma renders הפרזי, *open land*, which in this context modifies ערי, *cities*, hence, *un-walled*, i.e. *unfortified*. The translator apparently confused הפרזי with the (differently vocalized) gentilic form.

[68] Num. 13:20, and Prov. 25:28. It is attested for σ′ at Judg. 5:11, and 1 Kgs 6:18.

[69] It occurs in John Chrysostom, *Exp. Ps.*

[70] Wevers 1995, 540. [71] Wevers 1995, 1.

[72] Deut. 1:7; 2:8; 3:17 *bis*; 4:49; cf. 11:30. [73] Wevers 1995, 1.

candidate for recension. Attributed to α′ is the match ἆρμα, a deverbative from αἴρω, *lift*, and clearly an etymological rendering (cf. נשא, *lift*); σ′ has the more idiomatic βάρος, *burden*.[74] The use of βάσταγμα, *burden*, by F^b as a match for משא is not unparalleled. The equivalence is found in the Septuagint,[75] and the word is (weakly) attested for both α′ and σ′ at Exod. 1:11 as a match for סבלת, *burdens*.[76]

The last two items in this class are decidedly recensional. At Deut. 1:13 and 1:23 F^b reads εις τα σκηπτρα for εἰς τὰς φυλάς (ὑμῶν) (=𝔊^ed), rendering לשבטיכם. F^b represents a common match for שבט when it carries the sense, *staff* or *sceptre*.[77] In contexts such as 1:13 and 1:23, however, where the Hebrew word denotes the tribes of Israel, the Septuagint typically renders it by φυλή.[78] At Num. 18:2 σ′ and θ′ follow the Septuagint, while α′ renders the word by ῥάβδος, *rod*, *staff*.

Independent glosses

Eight readings (8 per cent of the sample) are demonstrably independent of the Septuagint, its transmission and its recension. While not great in number, it is worth emphasizing that they have not been cherry-picked. It should also be kept in mind that the present sample represents only a fraction of the total F^b readings for the Pentateuch.

One such reading underscores the Byzantine provenance of at least some of the source material. F^b reads απομονην twice: at Deut. 2:34 for ζωγρίαν (=𝔊^ed), *taking alive*, and also at Deut. 3:3 for σπέρμα (=𝔊^ed), *seed*. In both verses, the Greek lemma translates Hebrew שריד, *survivor*, *remnant*; neither match is felicitous, and both were revised accordingly.[79] At Deut. 2:34 and 3:3 the match λεῖμμα, *residue*, *remnant*, is attributed to α′; and ὑπόλειμμα, *remnant*, *remainder*, is attributed to σ′ and θ′ at 3:3.[80] The feminine noun ἀπομονή, a Byzantine demotic form, is a synonym of ὑπομονή, *remaining behind*.[81] As a gloss of שריד, it is independent of

[74] See Wevers 1995, 57. Both readings are well attested amongst the hexaplaric witnesses. They were recorded by the first hand of F, and hence known to F^b.

[75] 4 Reigns (2 Kgs) 15:33; Neh. 13:15, 19; Jer. 27:21, 22, 24, 27.

[76] See Wevers 1991, 67.

[77] For the Septuagint, see Judg. 5.14; 1 Reigns (1 Kgs) 2:28; 9:21 *bis*; 10:19, 20 *bis*, 21; 14:27 *bis*, 43; 15:17; etc. For the Three, see Gen. 49:10 (α′); Num. 24:17 (σ′); Isa. 28:27 (α′ σ′ θ′), etc.

[78] Gen. 49:16 (cf. 49:28); Exod. 24:4; Num. 4:18; 24:2; 32:33; Deut. 1:13, 16, 23; 3:13, etc.

[79] Cf. Targum Onkelos, which reads משיזיב, *survivor*, in both verses. Edition: Drazin 1982.

[80] Wevers 1995, 47.

[81] Kriaras and Kazazis 1969–, απομονή, η. There are three occurrences of the word in the Cretan play *Erofile* by Georgius Chortatzes (*c.* 1545–1610 CE): 8.417; 10.454, 480. There is one occurrence in the *Astrologica, Zodiologium*, 10.214.21, and a further one in *Fabulae Cretenses*, 6.154.

the Septuagint, and while the possibility of exegetical dependence on the Three exists, it seems unlikely.

The second reading in this category points unambiguously to a Jewish source. At Deut. 15:18 F^b reads διπλουν ημερας και νυκτος for the lemma ἐφέτειον μισθὸν τοῦ μισθωτοῦ (=𝔊^ed). The meaning of the underlying Hebrew phrase משנה שכר שכיר (𝔐) is somewhat uncertain. The Hellenistic translator takes it to refer to the *annual* (ἐφέτειον) *wage of a servant*; on this interpretation, the master of a manumitted slave is sufficiently compensated by the fact that he has been spared the cost of wages.[82] Since antiquity, however, the word משנה has generally been understood in the sense *double*. Thus α′ renders it δευτερούμενον, *occurring twice*, and F^b διπλοῦν, *twofold*. The Hellenistic translator is followed by α′ in construing שכר שכיר in terms of wages. F^b, on the other hand, introduces a temporal reference, *day and night*. This picks up on an interpretation attested in Jewish sources. In both the Sifre to Deuteronomy (*c.* 300 CE) and the Talmud (*b. Qidd.* 15a), משנה שכר שכיר is understood to mean that a Hebrew slave works both by day and by night, his night service consisting in procreation with a Canaanite maid-servant in order to raise offspring who will belong to his master.[83]

Contact with Jewish learning is also apparent at Deut. 3:6 where F^b reads ανδρων for ἑξῆς (=𝔊^ed). The lemma reads πᾶσαν πόλιν ἑξῆς καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ τὰ παιδία, *every city in order, and the women and the children*, a rendering of the Hebrew כל עיר מתם הנשים והטף (𝔐), where the phrase מתם הנשים והטף, *men, women and children*, explicates כל עיר, *every city*. According to Wevers the translator of 𝔊^Deut. assimilated the word מתם to the semantic field of תמם,[84] but this does not explain the presence of ἑξῆς. It would seem that none of the Hellenistic translators recognized the lexeme מת, *man* (which is attested only in the plural, מתים).[85] The apparent exception is the so-called Theodotionic Job, a translation in the *kaige* tradition, which renders מתם by ἄνδρες (Job 22:15, an asterisked passage). On the other hand, the Theodotionic rendering could well be due to contextual prompts rather than lexical knowledge. Consistent with this

82 Wevers 1995, 264. 83 See Drazin 1982, 52.

84 Wevers 1995, 46–7. The Greek translation is adapted from parallel phrasing at Deut. 2:34, which also renders מתם by ἑξῆς. The same match is used at Judg. 20:48.

85 The Hebrew idiom מתי מספר, *men of number* (i.e. *numerable*, hence a limited number of men) is translated as follows: ὀλιγοστός ἐν ἀριθμῷ at Gen. 34:30; ὀλίγοι ἀριθμῷ at Deut. 4:27; πολὺς ἐν ἀριθμῷ at Deut. 33:6; ὀλιγοστοὺς ἐν ἀριθμῷ at 1 Chr. 16:19; ἀριθμῷ βραχεῖς at Ps. 104:12 (𝔐 105:12). The idiom מעט במתי, *consisting of a few men*, is rendered ἐν ἀριθμῷ βραχεῖ at Deut. 26:5 and 28:62. See also the rendering of מתי by ὀλιγοστός at Isa. 41:14, and ממתים by ἀπὸ ὀλίγων at Ps. 16:14 (𝔐 17:14). In no instance is knowledge of the semantic element *man* evident.

hypothesis is the fact that neither Aquila nor Symmachus seem to have known the lexeme. At Ps. 16:14 (𝔐 17:14) they both assimiliate ממתים to the semantic field of מות, *die*, where the lemma reads ἀπὸ ὀλίγων (=𝔊ed). There is thus a strong likelihood that Fb represents a Hebrew–Greek gloss independent of the Hexapla, probably derived from a Jewish source. Targum Onkelos renders מתם by גבריא, *men*, at Deut. 2:34 and 3:6;[86] and within rabbinic tradition both the Sifre and Ibn Ezra (1089–1167 CE) understand the Hebrew word in this sense.

The remaining glosses represent Hebrew–Greek matches independent of earlier tradition, but which cannot be further characterized. At Deut. 3:27 Fb reads ορους for Λελαξευμένου (=𝔊ed). The rendering of the Hellenistic translator (i.e. the perfect participle of λαξεύω, *hew in stone*) occurs in both Greek Numbers as well as Deuteronomy.[87] Wevers suggests that the translator may have understood הפסגה to refer to a land mass which looked as though it were carved in stone.[88] Another possibility is an etymological rendering of the Hebrew.[89] The form פסגה was sometimes construed as a proper name in antiquity, and in the present verse the transcription Φασγά is attributed to α′, a match which also occurs in the Septuagint.[90] Targum Onkelos, on the other hand, renders the Hebrew word by מרמתא, *heights*.[91] The Fb gloss, *mountain*, is evidently drawing on a kindred interpretation.

Difficult to interpret is the gloss at Deut. 18:4 where Fb reads δεκατιας for ἀπαρχάς (=𝔊ed), here in reference to the *first fruits*, ראשית, of corn, wine and oil, which are due to the priests.[92] The word δεκατία is a loan from the Latin noun *decimatio*,[93] meaning *decimation* (the punishment of taking a tenth) or *tithing*. The Greek word is not widely attested in antiquity,[94] and occurs neither in the Septuagint nor its recensions. It is,

86 See also Pseudo-Jonathan, yet cf. Targum Neofiti.

87 Deut. 3:27; Num. 21:20; 23:14. Greek Deuteronomy is itself inconsistent; cf. Deut. 4:49.

88 See Wevers 1995, 64, 96, 557. Cf. Deut. 3:17 where the first hand of F reads φαραγγα, where 𝔊ed has Φασγά; at 4:49 𝔊ed reads λαξευτήν, which gives way in the tradition to λελαξευμενην under the influence of 3:27. At Deut. 34:1 ἡ λαξευτή is attributed to Aquila by Eusebius where the lemma reads Φασγά (=𝔊ed).

89 Driver 1895, 58, relates Hebrew פסגה to Aramaic פסג, *cleave*, and פסגא, *a cleft piece*.

90 Deut. 3:17; 34:1; Josh. 12:3; 13:20.

91 Drazin 1982, 77. At Deut. 3:17 Targum Onkelos renders תחת אשדת הפסגה (𝔐) by משפך מרמתא מדנחא, *from the slopes of the heights eastward*. See also Deut. 3:27, where ראש הפסגה (𝔐) is rendered לריש רמתא.

92 The lemma is the default match for this context. See Exod. 23:19; Lev. 2:12; 23:10; Num. 18:12; Deut. 26:2, 10. Cf. Exod. 34:26.

93 Sophocles 1900, 350. LSJ notes δεκατεία for Plutarch, *Ant.*, 39, where it carries the sense δεκατεύσις, *decimation*.

94 Lampe 1961–8 cites Dorotheus Abbas (d. 535 CE), *Doctrinae diversae* 15.1.

however, used in the sense *tithe* by Byzantine authors.[95] What is puzzling is that the offering referred to here is not a tenth. In halakhic literature, which relates this passage to Num. 18:12, it is known as the *terumah gedolah*. Though its extent is not precisely defined, according to the Mishnah the average *terumah* offering was one fiftieth of one's total produce.[96] The Fb note perhaps identifies the corn, wine and oil given to the priests as *tithes* in a general sense.[97]

Underlying two distinct Fb glosses (Deut. 21:5 and 24:8) is the same Hebrew word נגע, *stroke*, which in both instances is matched by the word ἁφή, *assault*, in the lemma (=𝔊ed). At 21:5 the context is a threefold description of Levitical duties, the third of which involves making pronouncements on all *disputes* (כל ריב) and all *strokes* (וכל נגע), here presumably in the sense, *marks* (arising from disease, especially what was then believed to be leprosy).[98] Fb, however, reads τυψις, *blow*, a word which is not otherwise attested in the tradition. At 24:8, where the reference of נגע (הצרעת) is to the physical marks caused by leprosy, Fb reads the dative of χρόα, *appearance* (especially pertaining to the colour of the skin), for ἁφῇ (λέπρας) (=𝔊ed). Here the Hellenistic translator was presumably following Greek Leviticus, which renders נגע by ἁφή in such contexts. The Three strongly favoured this match as well,[99] and while the form χροιά occurs in the Septuagint, it is not used as a match for נגע.[100] Fb thus stands alone.[101] The use of χρόα (originally an Attic form) in the singular is a late phenomenon.[102]

[95] The word is a vulgar form of τὸ δέκατον. See Byzantios 1856, 102. Theodore of Mopsuestia (fourth–fifth century CE) uses it in reference to *tithes* in his commentary on the Twelve Prophets (Joel 1 and Mal. 3). It is used in reference to the *tithe* of Μελχισεδέκ by Nikephoros Choumnos (*c.* 1250/55–1327). See Kriaras and Kazazis 1969–1997, δεκατιά, η.

[96] *m. Ter.* 4.3. The benevolent man gives one fortieth, the average man one fiftieth, and the miserly one sixtieth.

[97] Yet cf. *m. Ter.* 4.5: המרבה בתרומה רבי אליעזר אומר אחד מעשרה. To those who wish to give more R. Eliezar advises an offering of one tenth.

[98] Wevers 1995, 336.

[99] At Gen. 12:17 Aquila renders נגעים by ἀφεῖς where the lemma reads ἐτασμοῖς, *trials* (here the reference is to the afflictions, or *plagues*, laid upon Pharaoh and his house); at Exod. 11:1 ἁφήν is attributed to α′ and σ′ where the lemma renders נגע by πληγήν; at Pss. 88:33 (𝔐 89:32) and 90:10 (𝔐 91:9) where the lemma matches the Hebrew word with μάστιξ, ἁφή is attested as a match for α′ in the first instance, and both α′ and σ′ in the latter; at Isa. 53:4 σ′ reads ἁφή where the lemma is uncertain.

[100] Exod. 4:7; Wis. 13:14; 2 Macc. 3:16.

[101] Fb also reads the word χρόα for ἁφή (𝔊ed) at Lev. 13.3 and 14.35.

[102] In antiquity the Attic form χρόα occurs exclusively in the plural (cf. χροιά). The singular form χρόα is, however, attested in medieval Greek. See Sophocles 1900, 1172, who cites Heron, junior (*c.* 700 CE). It is used as a near-synonym of ἐπιφάνεια.

The textual character of F^b

Salvesen, whose detailed study of F^b in Exodus 1–24 is a model for future research, mooted that F^b is a ragbag collection of readings stemming from different versions and from different periods.[103] The results of the present analysis are consistent with this picture. Much of the present sample (88 per cent) can be accounted for either by inner-Greek processes or by the impact of the Hexapla. F^b resembles the Byzantine text of the Septuagint typologically, and thus – whatever its actual provenance – its textual character is consistent, in part, with the hypothesis of Christian transmission. This is perhaps as we should expect. Nevertheless, as a repository of corrections, textual variants and hexaplaric notes, F^b is in many ways atypical. Not only are a significant number of its glosses demonstrably independent of the ancient versions, but certain hexaplaric and Septuagintal matches appear to be used freely, implying knowledge of the Hebrew text; moreover there are strong hints of Hebrew interference in some of the corrections; lastly, there are traces of Jewish exegesis. Taken together these idiosyncrasies point to a source (or sources) independent of Christian transmission history. The textual heterogeneity of the material is such, I would suggest, as to rule out a single medieval recension as the source. De Lange has described the Greek scriptures in Byzantine Judaism in terms of an evolving tradition, free and colloquial but with ancient roots.[104] F^b undoubtedly taps into such a tradition, and may prove to be one of our best witnesses to it.

[103] Salvesen 2009, 126. [104] De Lange 2012, 379.

CHAPTER 10

Medieval and Early Modern Judaeo-Greek biblical translations
A linguistic perspective

Julia G. Krivoruchko

1 Linguistic approaches to Medieval and Modern biblical Judaeo-Greek

Works by Greek-speaking Jews in the Middle Ages and early modern period only gradually caught the attention of linguistic scholarship. The material spans the period from the Arab conquest to the early twentieth century, when traditional (as opposed to western-styled individual) translations were still produced in the Romaniote communities.[1] No major non-religious Greek texts by Byzantine Jews were known at the beginning of the twentieth century other than the few Judaeo-Greek glosses and liturgical fragments.[2] The only exception was the Constantinopolitan Pentateuch (CP), a fully fledged translation of the Torah printed in 1547.[3] A complete transcription into Greek letters, published by Hesseling in 1897, attracted immediate attention.

Late nineteenth-century linguistics was dominated by the neogrammarian perception of phonetics as the only strict scientific inquiry, and therefore the only firm footing for linguistics. In this respect the Hebrew script afforded advantages for investigating medieval phonetics.[4] In the spirit of his age, Hesseling viewed the CP as a *sui generis* phonetic recording expressed via the Hebrew alphabet,[5] and a faithful representation of 'la langue commune de la fin du moyen age'[6] or 'κοινή de Constantinople'.[7] For him, and contemporaries such as Belléli, the phonetic precision of CP

[1] The discussion below refers *only* to the texts written down in Hebrew characters, and it does so by necessity: the data about Jews using Greek script is too scarce to identify a corpus of texts written by Medieval and Early Modern Jews in Greek script or to estimate its size.

[2] Following the variationist approach, I define a language variety as Judaeo-Greek by virtue of its being used by Jews: every variety of Greek used by a Jew will be defined as a Jewish variety, notwithstanding its relationship to other varieties. Biblical Judaeo-Greek (BJG) denotes 'Medieval and Early Modern BJG'.

[3] For the historical background see Krivoruchko 2008.

[4] E.g., Darmesteter 1872, 146.

[5] Hesseling 1897, ix.

[6] Ibid., lx.

[7] Ibid., xxviii; cf. Belléli 1890, 289.

confirmed it was an 'authentic spoken language'.[8] Proponents of demotics admired such features as μιά pronounced as [mnja], or the reduction of the unstressed augment to [i] and [o] > [u].[9]

Anything that did not match expectations about 'true demotic' could easily be dismissed as a 'Semitism', although Hesseling refrained from this explanation. Faced with an indeclinable ἀνήρ, he declared: 'Écartons tout de suite les cas où l'auteur met un nom indéclinable par un effet d'hébraïsme.'[10] The translator, modelled on an educated western Jew, appeared to him too sophisticated to be guilty of violating basic grammar:

> [I]l est incroyable qu'un homme qui savait lire et écrire … et qui probablement l'avait appris par des livres écrits en grec littéraire … eût oublié les leçons de son précepteur au point de se tromper couramment dans l'un des paradigmes les plus fréquents de la grammaire.[11]

The editor's opinion carried conviction. Given the size and uniqueness of the CP, books on the history of Greek began to refer to it, reproducing almost verbatim the observations of Hesseling.[12] Belief in its demotic nature led to its being included in the dictionary of medieval vernacular Greek by Kriaras.[13] In the early 1990s de Lange also emphasized the colloquial component of Biblical Judaeo-Greek (BJG).[14] Indeed, it seemed self-evident that the rendering of Deut. 24:1 סֵפֶר כְּרִיתֻת as χαρτί κόψιμο in CP is more demotic than βιβλίον ἀποστασίου in LXX or βιβλίον κοπῆς in the *Graecus Venetus*.

However, recent examination of the syntax and morphology of CP has shown that it lacks certain features of demotic and displays a number of idiosyncrasies. Joseph's study of syntactic constructions in the Balkans observed that infinitives 'occur in greater numbers and in a wider range of uses than can generally be found in Greek of that period'.[15] He points to 'unusual CP infinitives':[16]

(1) Infinitive as object of preposition:
ἐστράφην ἀπὸ τοῦ δέρει

[8] Belléli 1906, 310; Belléli n.d., 1. [9] See Hatzidakis 1891; Hatzidakis 1898.
[10] Hesseling 1897, xlv. [11] Hesseling 1897, xlv–xlvi.
[12] E.g., Tonnet 1995, 110–19, but cf. Tonnet 1992, 209; Aslanov 1999, 387 and 389.
[13] See section 6 below.
[14] E.g., de Lange 1993, 209. Recently he has predominantly noted its mixed character (de Lange 2012, 374 and 379).
[15] Joseph 2000, 6. The pagination refers to the online version of the article.
[16] Ibid.: 7. The examples from Joseph 2000 are followed by his translation; the numbering is mine. The text of CP is given after Hesseling 1897.

וַיֵּצֵא ... אַחֲרֵי שׁוּבוֹ מֵהַכּוֹת
'He returned from the slaying'[17] (Gen. 14:17)

(2) Infinitive as perception verb complement:
εἶδιεν τὸν ἄγγελο τοῦ κύριου στέκει
וַיַּרְא אֶת-מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה נִצָּב
'He saw the angel of the Lord standing' (Num. 22:31)

(3) Infinitive in future tense (only once in the whole text):
δὲ θέλει ἐμποδιθεῖ[18]
לֹא-יִבָּצֵר מֵהֶם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר יָזְמוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת
'He will not be deterred'[19] (Gen. 11:6)

(4) Infinitive in innovative Hebraistic usage:
ἐσύντυχεν μετ᾽ ἐκεῖνον ὁ θεὸς τοῦ εἰπεῖ
וַיְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר
'God spoke to him saying' (literally: 'spoke to say')[20] (Gen. 17:3)

As cases (1)–(3) are all possible in medieval Greek, Joseph's insight refers to their relative frequency. Further he points to the archaic nature of some constructions, suggesting cautiously that

> one would have to reconcile the colloquial nature of the text from a phonological standpoint with the use of these otherwise archaic elements; moreover, one can argue that deliberately translating a text into a linguistic form that is not current among the likely users of the translation is self-defeating. Thus it seems best to take the evidence of the text at face-value, so that if the text is colloquial, then the conclusion to draw is that these uses of the infinitive are colloquial.[21]

The CP disobeys the norms of Early Modern Greek in other respects too. In an anlysis of nominal endings in -μα, -μος and -σις in Early Modern Greek sources, Karantzola concludes that a large number of -μα derivatives in CP are either not attested elsewhere, or not in the meanings represented in CP.[22] In total, these nouns constitute about one tenth of the material. For this reason she argues that CP derivatives are evidence of the productivity of the -μα suffix in the period but should be excluded from a broader historical inquiry.[23]

[17] Cf. KJV 'after his return from the slaughter'.
[18] So in the Breslau version; P reads here νὰ μηδὲν ἐμποδισθῇ.
[19] Cf. KJV 'and now nothing will be restrained from them'. Translations of biblical passages are drawn from KJV.
[20] Cf. KJV 'and God talked with him, saying …'.
[21] Joseph 2000, 8.
[22] Karandzola 2004, 223, 228.
[23] Ibid., 221–3.

In contrast to Hesseling, modern researchers discounted unusual phenomena as Semitisms, giving them no further consideration.[24] However, linguistic methodology does not favour sheer descriptivism, and readers expect key issues to be tackled: whether the 'Semitisms' were intentional and for what reason, why certain 'Semitisms' were tolerated while others were not, how they were perceived, what proportion of 'Semitisms' was deemed acceptable, and so on. Some of these problems were addressed by scholars interested in CP as a translation.[25] They tended to concentrate, however, on comparison between CP and LXX, and other renderings, such as *Graecus Venetus*, glosses to MS Ambrosianus A 147 (F^{b}), and so on.

The time is now ripe, with the publications of de Lange, to study BJG synchronically rather than its diachronic relationship with Hellenistic Judaeo-Greek (JG), itself a problematic area of study. BJG needs to be approached comprehensively – as envisaged by contemporary functional linguistics and pragmatics with their emphasis on speech act, intention of speaker, context of speech and diversity of expression, coupled with cognitive linguistics, with its emphasis on processing language data, acquisition and analysis. Below we will examine the pragmatic and social contexts of BJG, and the options for a theoretical description.

2 Pragmatics of Medieval and Early Modern BJG translations

The pragmatic context of Medieval and early Modern BJG can be gleaned from four main sources:

1. contemporaneous data: the manuscripts containing the BJG texts;
2. prospective projection of the data from Hellenistic BJG;
3. retrospective projection of the data about Modern BJG;
4. typologically similar data from other traditions.

Evidence of the translation process in the Jewish–Greek-speaking communities of late antiquity and early Byzantium is lacking. A consensus in Septuagint and cognate studies is that later translations tend to be closer to the Hebrew original: *kaige* is a move towards literalism when compared with Old Greek, and Aquila is even more literal than *kaige*.[26] The move towards literalism would have been inexplicable were it not for the

[24] Tonnet 1995, 110; Joseph 2000: 6, 10–11; Karandzola 2004, 223; Aslanov 2012, 394.
[25] Blondheim 1924; Aslanov 1999. [26] Dines 2004, 81–92; Fernández Marcos 2000, 72, 109–21.

growing appreciation of the Hebrew. Thus, even if the diverse processes of LXX revision or retranslation had no educational intentions – and opinions are divided on this – they certainly had didactic outcomes. A major consequence was the emergence of texts (and language varieties) that were increasingly more user-friendly for learners of Hebrew as a second language.

Medieval BJG manuscripts testify to their functions: they apparently contain private aides-mémoires and liturgical aids. The Hebrew–Greek glossaries clearly serve as study aids. The CP even declares its educational intention on the front page. By contrast, both translations of Jonah are found inside prayer books for personal use. The JG fragment of Ecclesiastes (T-S Misc. 28.74) is copied on a small leaf of parchment with a prick in the middle and without signs of proper binding. This suggests private use, but does not give any codicological clues to the nature of the complete text. It could have been used on Shemini Atseret or perhaps Shabbat of Sukkoth, as in modern Sephardi and Ashkenazi communities respectively.

No large, well-written codices with complete translations of the Pentateuch from the first half of the second millennium are known, suggesting that there might have been very few texts that enjoyed overwhelming public acceptance.[27] The lack of exemplary texts may mean that most translations were produced ad hoc, since no authority was influential enough to impose a unified version on the diverse domains of Jewish Byzantium. Multiple equivalents for the same lexeme in the glossaries suggest a lack of standardization.[28] However, translation was far from being an individual venture – translations were products of venerated tradition. Consistency of translation equivalents, seen in almost identical glosses in manuscripts separated by time and space, would be inconceivable without a conscious reverence on the part of copyists.[29] Yet the preservation of individual equivalents and repeated use of the same glossaries did not have to result in identical oral or written texts.

Oral translations from Hebrew into the vernacular during the liturgy were discussed in detail in the Talmud.[30] On the other hand, teaching practices relating to the Hebrew Bible feature less prominently, and we

[27] By contrast, the lower layer of the palimpsest T-S 12.186 + T-S 12.187 + T-S 12.188 (Cambridge University Library), written on large leaves, could have been an authoritative copy. This type of manuscript would still be in circulation in the time of Justinian's *Novella* 146.

[28] de Lange 1996b, 156–63; de Lange 2003.

[29] See de Lange 2003, 147 for the similarity of equivalents in Fitzwilliam Bible and CP; ibid., 145, for the similarity of Fitzwilliam Bible and F^{b}.

[30] Smelik 1999; Smelik 2007.

know little about them. It is very probable that both continued throughout the post-Talmudic period. Evidence of liturgical BJG translations as late as the twentieth century appears in Crete and Epirus.[31] This practice probably had its roots in medieval and early modern times, given that it is not unique to Greek–Jewish groups.

A wealth of similar traditions is known, including among Sephardic and neo-Aramaic Jewish communities.[32] Oral liturgical translations are improvised as a matter of routine, delegated to those deemed knowledgeable enough to produce a reliable translation. An analogous 'practice of writing a text in one language and reading it in another' (alloglottography) is known from Syriac Christian liturgy, although no training materials have been preserved.[33]

Typological parallels can be found in better preserved corpora where glossaries, sometimes referred to as ספרי פתרונות, still exist (Judaeo-Arabic, Judaeo-Spanish, other varieties of Jewish Romance, Yiddish, etc.). A number of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century JG glossaries have survived, some of them with explicit reference to the teachers who composed and used them.[34] However, there seem to be no descriptions of the actual teaching of BJG. Based on the JG glossaries and modern didactic practices in traditional communities, we can probably assume that the teacher recited a unit of the original followed by a translation, and the pupils repeated after him.

In sum, there is weighty evidence for hypothesizing two sub-types of discourse, namely two language sub-varieties merging into BJG: the didactic and the liturgical. What was the relationship between them and to what extent can they be distinguished? It is logical to suggest a significant degree of similarity between the liturgically performed translations and the didactic ones, since individuals reciting Greek versions would have undergone traditional schooling and would have remembered much of the techniques and equivalents taught. Yet didactic and liturgical translations could not be identical. Because the liturgical performance had to satisfy different pragmatic requirements, it belonged to the more egalitarian domain of public speech among worshippers rather than to the

[31] What texts were performed in which places, is not completely clear. According to Belléli [n.d., 1], 'it was there [in Candia] that the Greek translation [of Jonah] was solemnly read in the afternoon service of the Day of Attonement'. He denies that such practice took place in Corfu. Matsas 1953, 11, on the other hand, states that he personally heard the translations chanted in the Ioannina synagogue. For more on the orality of BJG translations see Krivoruchko 2012.

[32] Bunis 1996; Rees 2008. [33] Kiraz 2012, 359–62.

[34] Belléli 1891, 251–2, notes that those at the end of the nineteenth century were extremely conservative in their language.

educational setting with its strict authority structure. The liturgical translation was therefore more open to variation.

A liturgical translation would have been expected to be aesthetically marked because of its link with divine worship. This would result in increasingly more rhetorical performances, featuring rhythmic declamation, chanting, phonetically and metrically selected vocabulary, etc. From the listeners' perspective, elevated status would be associated with the elements of such speech acts, even if none was initially intended. School discourse, on the other hand, was relatively free from such requirements.

3 The notion of a 'calque language variety': Sociolinguistics in the realm of philology

The link between the glossaries as products of the school environment and biblical translations was evident already for Blondheim.[35] Yet those working on Judaeo-Spanish material were the first to realize the importance of the didactic translations for linguistic research. In the early 1970s Séphiha examined the distinction between written Judaeo-Spanish of medieval biblical translations and his own mother tongue, the spoken Judaeo-Spanish. To describe the language of didactic translations he coined the term 'calque language':

> Les traducteurs juifs de la Bible et des textes liturgiques se sont efforcés de CALQUER le texte hébreu comme l'ont fait les pédagogues et auteurs de nos traductions latines juxtalinéaires …
>
> Ils aboutirent ainsi à une LANGUE CALQUE incompréhensible, par exemple pour le judéo-espagnol, à tout hispanophone ignorant les premiers mots de l'hébreu, voire aux judéo-hispanophones contemporains … Il diffère du judéo-espagnol vivant ou vernaculaire par son littéralisme, ses contorsions syntaxiques, notamment dans le respect du genre et du nombre de l'hébreu, et un plus grand nombre d'archaïsmes.[36]

Séphiha saw calque languages as unique linguistic phenomena arising in particular religious environments. He notably distinguished between the calque variety and the spoken language of the community, having termed the Spanish-based language of translations 'Ladino', and the spoken vernacular 'Judezmo', thereby hypostasizing them.[37]

[35] Blondheim 1925, xxxviii–xxxix, lxxii. [36] Séphiha 1973, 45.
[37] Outside linguistics the terms *Ladino* and *Judezmo* are used interchangeably.

Séphiha coined the term 'judéo-grec calque', correctly applying it to CP.[38] However, following Marcus, who denied any Jewish variety of Spanish before 1492, Séphiha believed it was possible to have a calque language variety without the corresponding vernacular.[39] In particular he doubted the existence of a vernacular JG.[40] Nowadays, when the variationist approach takes such existence for granted, we are in a much better position to appreciate BJG both on its own and in its interaction with its spoken counterpart. Unaware of any native term for the calque variety of Greek, I have termed the JG calque variety 'Biblical Judaeo-Greek' (BJG).[41] In what follows the concept of calquing will be applied to Greek and illustrated by morphology, lexicon and phonetics. Syntax, as a more self-evident domain of calquing, will be omitted, although it constitutes an interesting field of research on its own.

4 Internal variation in BJG and its pragmatic meaning

'Calquing' aims to approximate the original biblical text in its content and form; it strives to represent unambiguously the semantics and order of morphemes. Many descriptions of calque languages claim that they 'translate word for word'. It would be more precise to define the basic unit of analysis as morpheme, subsuming word order under morpheme order. A simplified example of the morpheme-to-morpheme principle can be seen in the following gloss on folio 13r of the St. Petersburg glossary:[42]

(5) והרדידים (and the veils, Isa. 3:23): καὶ τὰ μαφόρια (and the *maphoriums*).

Here ו equals καὶ, -ה equals τὰ, רדיד is represented by μαφόρι-, and -ים by -α.

Calquing is obviously dependent on the meta-linguistic awareness of the translator: his ability to parse the source and his grammatical knowledge. However, not every sequence of morphemes in the source language (Hebrew) can be echoed/modelled in the target language (Greek), as some morphemes in the source may be redundant, while others may be absent in the target language, or their order may differ. As the technique

[38] Séphiha 1973, 45–7; Séphiha 1975, 118. [39] Séphiha 1973, 47–50; Séphiha 1975, 118–19.

[40] Séphiha 1973, 47: 'On ne peut affirmer qu'il existe un judéo-grec vernaculaire, tout aussi fantomatique que le judéo-français étudié par Menahem Banitt.'

[41] Krivoruchko 2002, 47.

[42] MS Evr. IIA 1980, National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg, fol. 33v, a glossary to the Prophets from Asia Minor(?), mid-fourteenth century (= GlPr).

entrenches itself, calquing may evolve towards copying not only syntagmatic but also paradigmatic relationships of the source language.

Apart from meta-linguistic awareness, modelling is dependent on the intentions of the translator in the widest possible sense, his ideology (traditionalist vs. innovative, archaizing vs. modernizing), target audience (beginners or advanced, male or mixed audience including women and children), ad hoc performance requirements (shorter or longer translations), and so on. The extent of modelling varies between texts and within a single text, dependent on the translator's wish: BJG as a language variety allows for significant internal variation. For illustration, let us compare two passages of JG biblical translations:

(6) καὶ ἐλάλησα ἐν καρδίαν μου ὥς γὰρ τοῦτο μάταιον[43]
וְדִבַּרְתִּי בְלִבִּי שֶׁגַּם-זֶה הָבֶל
'Then I said in my heart, that this also [is] vanity' (Eccl. 2:15)[44]

In Hebrew, the definiteness of לב 'heart' is conveyed by a pronominal suffix without the article. In Greek, one would expect an article in this position in the eleventh-century text,[45] although in an earlier period it would be unnecessary.[46] The indirect speech in Hebrew does not contain a verb – again, a nominal sentence would be acceptable in earlier Greek, but while in Medieval Greek a form of 'to be' is anticipated, the lack of copula does not obscure the message. The complete symmetry between the two languages suggests that the translation is didactically oriented, and could be used as such for many centuries.

On the other hand, consider the following passage:

(7) κοιτάξτε εἰς τὸν Ἀβρααμ τὸν πατέρα σας, καὶ εἰς τὴ Σαρα
הַבִּיטוּ אֶל-אַבְרָהָם אֲבִיכֶם וְאֶל-שָׂרָה
τὴν κοιλοπονήτρα σας, μὲ ὅλο ὅπου ἤτουν ἕνας
תְּחוֹלֶלְכֶם כִּי-אֶחָד
τὸν ἠμεγαλούσεψα, καὶ τὸν ηὐλόγησα καὶ τὸν ἠπέρσιψα
קְרָאתִיו וַאֲבָרְכֵהוּ וְאַרְבֵּהוּ

'Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah [that] bore you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him' (Isa. 51:2)[47]

[43] I have transcribed this and the following BJG texts into normalized orthography while retaining their phonetic peculiarities.

[44] Cambridge University Library, T-S Misc. 28.74, col. 1–2r, Byzantium, eleventh century or earlier; see de Lange 1996a, 78.

[45] Presuming that the text is contemporaneous with the manuscript.

[46] Cf. LXX ἐγὼ τότε περισσὸν ἐλάλησα ἐν καρδίᾳ μου.

[47] Yad Ben Zvi Library, Jerusalem, MS 3519, fol. 4v, Epirus, nineteenth century or earlier. The manuscript has been partially published in Sznol (1996–7) and Krivoruchko (1999). Its full publication has been prepared by us.

In contrast to (6), the translator added articles before πατέρα and κοιλοπονήτρα, inserted the phrase μὲ ὅλο ὅπου ἤτουν 'despite the fact that he was' reflecting a traditional interpretation of the verse,[48] providing both the predicate for ἕνας and a sentence connector. He even changed the order of morphemes: the objects denoted by the pronominal suffixes in קְרָאתִיו וַאֲבָרְכֵהוּ וְאַרְבֵּהוּ were replaced by preverbal clitics. However, this movement towards standard Greek was only partial: εἰς is not needed but is repeated, since in calquing the translator must not leave any source item untranslated, including the preposition אֶל.

The difference in approaches between the first and second translator illustrates the options available within BJG. The author of the first text ignores the connection between the two syntagms of the verse: ως γάρ is not a univocal introduction to indirect speech, and could be misinterpreted. The lack of connectivity renders the verse as a sequence of syntagms rather than coherent discourse. The second translator, on the contrary, cares about the coherence and lavishly inserts discourse markers – a communication strategy to secure comprehensibility. It remains to ask how these strategies correlate with the possible functions of the texts.

5 The morphology of BJG as a calque language variety

As already mentioned, an ideal BJG translation aims at morpheme-to-morpheme equivalence. As a result, BJG morphology is affected by the general demands of mapping one system onto another.

In the fourteenth-century BJG manuscript, a glossary to the Prophets (G1Pr), one finds the following gloss on אֲנוּשָׁה:

(8) ἀνδρειωμένη (sc. πληγή)
לָמָּה הָיָה כְאֵבִי נֶצַח וּמַכָּתִי אֲנוּשָׁה מֵאֲנָה הֵרָפֵא

> 'Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, [which] refuseth to be healed?' (Jer. 15:18)

The logic that has produced this calque, in all probability, is as follows: the participle אֲנוּשָׁה contains the consonants אנש and serves as an epithet of wounds or pain. No verbal forms with such a root appear in Scripture, and it is therefore impossible to connect אֲנוּשָׁה to any verb. However, the common noun אנשים 'men, humans' contains such a root and can consequently be chosen as a point of reference for further modelling. The

[48] Cf., e.g., a similar connector in *Metsudat David ad locum*: 'כי אחד קראתיו' - עם כי היה יחידי בארץ כנען .... … אני קראתיו וגדלתיו … ('for I called him' – notwithstanding the fact that he was alone in the land of Canaan … I called him and increased him …').

suitable translation equivalent to אנשים is ἄνδρες, which has the added advantage of being partly homoionymic. Yet it is not self-evident what a participle derived from 'men, humans' should mean or how it would fit into the context. Luckily, there exists another Hebrew word for ἄνδρας, גבר, which in contrast to אנשים has many well-documented verbal derivatives. For example:

(9) וַיִּגְבְּרוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּרְבּוּ מְאֹד עַל-הָאָרֶץ
ἀντρειώθηκαν τὰ νερὰ καὶ ἐπλήθυναν πολλὰ ἴπὶ τὴν ἡγή (CP)

'And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth' (Gen. 7:18)

Medieval Greek verbs from the root ανδρ- are also helpful:

ανδρειούμαι 1) Γίνομαι άνδρας, μεγαλώνω: ούτος … ανδρειωθείς 'ς αύξησιν ηλικίας Διγ. Z 1249. 2) Αποκτώ δύναμη, δυναμώνω, ενισχύομαι: Φυσιολ. (Zur.) LIV4
and,
ανδρειώνω II 2) Γίνομαι άντρας, μεγαλώνω (στα χρόνια): Διγ. O 1256.[49]

The relationship between גבר 'a (male) person' with its various homographs meaning 'strong/brave/mighty man' and the verb גבר 'to be strong, to prevail, act insolently', is mapped onto ἄνδρας – ἀνδρειοῦμαι/ἀνδρειώνομαι and is further analogically transferred onto the relationship between אנשים and אֲנוּשָׁה.

Following the calquing conventions in GlPr, Hebrew participles should be rendered by Greek forms in [-omenos], and ἀνδρειωμένη fits the bill. The translation is ingenious not only morphologically, but also semantically, as it exploits the tendency of the verbs ἀνδρειοῦμαι/ἀνδρειώνομαι to be semantically bleached: cf. CP Gen. 7:18, 'growth of human' > *'growth of animated object' > 'growth of any object'; Jer. 15:18, 'growth affecting human' > 'growth affecting human sensation/a part of the human body'.

One may suggest (but cannot verify) that ἀνδρειωμένη was also chosen because it could be reinterpreted as 'forceful',[50] satisfying those who follow the ancient (sourced from Aquila or Theodotion?) understanding of this word as βιαία.[51] It is not unusual for the BJG translators to choose polysemous equivalents, if they conform to the morphological parsing of the original.

49 Kriaras and Kazazis 1969–, s.vv.
50 See Kriaras and Kazazis 1969–, s.v. *ανδρειώνω*, μτχ. παρκ. ως επίθ. 1 α) and 1 β).
51 Ziegler 1957.

geber 'man'	[translation] ⇨3	ἄνδρας 'man'	[morph. modelling] ⇨4	ἀνδρειοῦμαι 'grow'
[synonymy] ⇧2				[analogy] ⇩5
'ănāšîm 'men'	*⇨	*ἄνδρας 'man'	*⇨	ἀνδρειοῦμαι 'grow'
[morph. parsing] ⇧1				[morph. modelling] ⇩6
'ănûšâ '?'	⇔ 8	*ἀνδρειωμένη 'forceful'	*[ambiguation] ⇦7	ἀνδρειωμένη 'growing'

Figure 10.1 Generation of translational equivalent (1–7) vs. perception of a monolingual reader (8).

The process of generating the equivalent, including the potential exploitation of its polysemy (termed 'ambiguation' and marked with asterisks as non-provable) is shown in Figure 10.1.

A monolingual Greek speaker is likely to interpret ἀνδρειωμένη πληγή metonymically as 'manly wound', 'a wound acquired as a result of manly/brave/heroic actions' or 'a wound of a (courageous) man/hero', rather than 'a gaping wound'. The interpretation of BJG cannot be gleaned from other translations (see KJV in example 8) or the LXX ἡ πληγή μου στερεά. The meaning of BJG texts is ascertained from within their system, and not via irrelevant external data.

Example (8) brings us back to the initial question, namely how usable are the BJG data for research into Medieval and Early Modern Greek morphology and syntax. The majority of ad hoc lexical creations are morphologically congruent with the translational and linguistic norms:

(10) φοσατεύγονται (GlPr, 30v)
(they) get together as the army does.

The verb is derived from φοσάτο as a rendering of יִתְגּוֹדָדוּ:

וָאַשְׂבִּעַ אוֹתָם וַיִּנְאָפוּ וּבֵית זוֹנָה יִתְגּוֹדָדוּ

'when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses' (Jer. 5:7)

At first glance, such forms as ἀνδρειωμένος (8) and ἠμεγαλούσεψα (7) exhibit Greek derivational morphemes (suffixes and augment). But are they built upon Greek derivational patterns? For ἀνδρειωμένος, it is hardly

the case. The relationship between the two Greek lexemes, ἄνδρας and ἀνδρειωμένος, is that of their Hebrew prototypes: they do not share a similar derivational process in standard Greek.

Notably, to create the verb ἠμεγαλούσεψα 'I made somebody/something big/great/rich/famous' the translator treats the adjective μεγάλος as a stem for derivation and applies his default model of verbal generation through the addition of -εύω. He appears unaware of μεγαλύνω and ignores μεγαλώνω.[52] He also fails to remove the adjectival ending -ος, taking the whole word μεγάλος as if it were a stem; he is essentially treating a Greek word as a foreign element without internal structure.

Although one could interpret the BJG texts without reference to their original (Hebrew) meaning and real (Hebrew-dependent) morphology, it is fairer to consider the mechanism and history of their generation. From this viewpoint, example (2) is not an infinitive at all, but a third person singular present indicative, as suggested by its prototype נִצָּב. Joseph dismissed this option suggesting that 'a subordinating element such as να' or something similar would be needed.[53] Yet there is no evidence that the absence of a connector should have troubled the translator, who was under no pressure to produce a syntactically correct Greek text and was able to ignore even such basic rules as case and gender agreement. For example:

(11) φωνὴ αἵματα (sc. αἵματος) (CP)
קוֹל דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ
[the] voice of thy brother's blood. (Gen. 4:10)
ενπρηστής /ενπυριστής καιόμενον (sc. καιόμενος) (GlPr, fol. 16v)
שָׂרָף מְעוֹפֵף
'[a] fiery flying serpent' (Isa. 14:29)

Example (7) illustrated a similar strategy of strict mapping: εις τον κάμνει is preferable to (ο)πoυ κάμνει, όποιον κάμνει, since it avoids elements which have no prototype in the Hebrew.

From the viewpoint of Hebrew, there is also no principled difference between (1) and (4), because both מֵהַכּוֹת and לֵאמֹר are combinations of prepositions and infinitives. In the traditional translation technique the preposition לְ- is often rendered by the article, facilitating the extension of articulated infinitives into such contexts as (1). Therefore, it would be more precise to describe both examples – and not only (4) – as representing a Hebraizing tendency.

[52] It is possible that μεγαλύνω was avoided owing to its popularity in Christian prayers, e.g. *Ode to Theotokos* starting with Μεγαλύνει η ψυχή μου τον Κύριον (= Luke 1:46).

[53] Joseph 2000, 6–7.

6 Lexicon of BJG as a calque language variety

In the light of these translations one can conclude, following Peircean semiotics, that the words of BJG are not only symbolic signs of real-world entities (as words of non-calque language varieties) but also indexical and at times iconic signs of their corresponding Hebrew words.[54] Their lexical semantics is predicated on their indexical and iconic value.

This iconic nature of lexical semantics in BJG is not a frequent phenomenon in the world's languages, but neither is it entirely unusual. Some lexical sub-systems perform similar functions. It is therefore simplistic and unhistorical to interpret BJG lexemes only as referring to an extra-linguistic reality while ignoring the basics of their functioning. Unfortunately, this is the current practice of interpreting JG texts – bypassing both the translators and Hebrew originals. For instance, the dictionary of Medieval Demotic Greek contains many examples like the following:

(12) ερπέτευμα το˙ σερπέτεμα. (Ως σύστ. αντικ.) δημιουργία: είπεν ο Θεός: ας σερπετέψουν τα *νερά* και σερπέτεμα ψυχή ζωντανή Πεντ. Γέν. Ι 20. [< ερπετεύω + κατάλ. –μα].

The above interpretation has been derived from the CP for Gen. 1:20. There one encounters the verb שרץ meaning 'to abound in small moving creatures (such as insects, small rodents, etc.)' and a noun שֶׁרֶץ constituting the internal object of the verb. No Greek verb shares the same semantics. The calque translator, in choosing among semantically imperfect equivalents, settled upon one closest phonetically: שרץ is similar to σερπετεύω, since שׂ was pronounced as [s] in the JG system of Hebrew pronunciation.[55] The noun σερπετό is used for 'snake' in key parts of Genesis; cf. Lat. *serpens*.

The 'moving creatures' of KJV are thus 'crawling creatures' for the CP translator. Since the semantics of the sentence is coherent and the phonetics is partially retained, the translation can be considered successful. Having decided on the verb σερπετεύω, the translator further maps the Hebrew noun into σερπέτεμα. Obviously, σερπετεύω cannot be replaced by ἑρπετεύω in the BJG system, because this would destroy the very logic

[54] Cf. Fernández Marcos 2000, 116.

[55] Morag 1971; Drettas 1999, 280–6. The third and subsequent consonants of the Greek verb do not seem to have been relevant in accordance with early medieval Hebrew grammar. The discovery of a triliteral root seems to have had little impact on BJG translations.

of the mapping.[56] It is equally evident that such semantic considerations have little in common with δημιουργία.[57]

7 Phonetics of BJG as a calque language variety

Calquing does not operate directly on the level of phonetics, because parsing of the original starts at the level of meaningful units, the lowest of which are morphemes. Yet this does not place phonetics outside the broad ideology of imitation: Greek words can still 'approximate' Hebrew ones, becoming their iconic sign as far as they phonetically resemble them.

On every level of language structure, priority is given to phenomena that are isomorphic to Hebrew. On the level of phonetics isomorphism is expressed as homoeophony:[58] קרא is commonly rendered as κράζω 'I call', גם as γάρ (example 5), and שרץ as σερπέτεμα (example 9). Thus, BJG translation involves not only translating proper (i.e. the search for semantic equivalents irrespective of phonetics), but also creative phono-semantic matching. To achieve homoeophony, unusual forms, such as archaisms and dialectisms, can be retained in spite of phonetic development and the requirements of stylistic homogeneity.

In a school setting, acoustic similarity facilitates initial memorization of equivalents. Subsequently, it reinforces the perception of a commonality of semantic space between two languages in the minds of trained (i.e. multicompetent) individuals. This, in turn, has many added benefits: better understanding of the semantics of Hebrew, and thus more proficient exegesis, and better performance as a traditional translator.

8 Production vs. reception of BJG

A distinction should be made between the initial function and perception of BJG texts and their current understanding. There is no evidence that in the Byzantine and Ottoman Jewish communities the Greek translations were used separately from the source-text and read as compositions *suo*

[56] Cf. the insightful comment of Hatzidakis that σερπετόν derives its [s-] *not* from *spiritus asper* (1891, 629).

[57] In Septuagint terms, the editors of Kriaras might be said to side with T. Muraoka and *La Bible d'Alexandrie* rather than with J. Lust, E. Tov and the *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (*NETS*). There is however greater historical evidence for the pragmatic functions of (some of) the LXX compared to BJG corpus.

[58] The term is used in biblical studies to distinguish cross-linguistic from intralinguistic phonetic similarity (homonymy) and is not to be confused with 'homophonic translation', covering such phenomena as mondegreen, *soramimi*, etc.

jure. The very format of the BJG translations attests to their purpose as accompanying and facilitating the understanding of the Hebrew original.

The addressees of BJG texts were partly multilingual Jewish males in various stages of their education, who knew some Hebrew and perhaps Aramaic, as well as wider Jewish audiences on festive occasions. One may confidently state that BJG translations were never intended to be used by Greek Christians since they were written in Hebrew letters, with which very few Christians were familiar. Neither is it likely that Christians were present in large numbers during the liturgical performances of such texts. Thus, BJG translations substantially differ from the texts aimed at monolingual Greek-speakers.

Jewish speakers with a fair competence in Hebrew were able to appreciate a calque text from the viewpoint of both the source and the target languages. Such speakers operate with an extended language competence. Theories of language acquisition describe such competence as 'multicompetence', a special form of language competence that is qualitatively different from the sum of two monolingual competencies.[59]

In contrast, readers without Hebrew are only able to approach a calque translation as a target language composition – notwithstanding the fact, let us reiterate, that such usage was never intended. Even those knowledgeable in Medieval Greek will be puzzled by many texts such as:

(13) ὁρμηνειὰ μνιὰ νὰ εἶναι ἐσᾶς εἰς τὸν κάμνει μὲ λαθασμό (CP)
תּוֹרָה אַחַת יִהְיֶה לָכֶם לָעֹשֶׂה בִּשְׁגָגָה

It is hardly immediately apparent that this means, 'Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance' (Num. 15:29).[60]

Likewise, consider:

(14) ὄνειρο ὀνειρευτήκαμε καὶ διαλυτὴς δὲν εἶναι αὐτό (CP)
חֲלוֹם חָלַמְנוּ וּפֹתֵר אֵין אֹתוֹ

Monolingual readers will struggle to understand this as 'We have dreamed a dream, and [there is] no interpreter [of] it' (Gen. 40:8). Contemporaries as much as modern readers would find these examples strange.[61]

Therefore, in accordance with the (widely understood) pragmatic and systemic functional linguistic approach, there is a substantial gap between

[59] Grosjean 1992; Cook 1992.

[60] Cf. the translation of the Jewish Publication Society: 'ye shall have one law (for him) that doeth aught in error', LXX νόμος εἷς ἔσται αὐτοῖς, ὃς ἂν ποιήσῃ ἀκουσίως.

[61] Cf. Tonnet 1992, 209 about the incomprehensibility of Hebrew (-influenced) syntax for Greek speakers.

CP and the remnants of medieval BJG on the one hand, and the original biblical Greek paraphrases and Christian translations, such as *Παλαιά τε και Νέα Διαθήκη* by Ioannikios Kartanos (1536), *Παλαιά και Νέα Διαθήκη* by an anonymous Cretan author of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, or *Η Καινή Διαθήκη του Κυρίου ημών Ιησού Χριστού* by Maximos Kallioupolites from the early seventeenth century.

9 Conclusions: the myths of 'low BJG' and 'conservative JG'

We have seen that medieval and modern JG biblical translations emerged in a specific socio-linguistic and historical milieu of traditional biblical study oriented towards the source text, treating translations as subservient tools. To be precise, linguistic analysis of these texts must take into account that these 'translations', perhaps better called 'models' of the source text, reflect unique discourse requirements, setting them apart from all other forms of translated or original Medieval and Early Modern Greek.

The socio-historical context which gave birth to BJG made it an *autonomous sub-system* to be judged by its own internal criteria. Applying our knowledge of mainstream Greek to the phenomena of medieval and modern BJG requires caution: even the forms, lexemes and constructions that appear standard Greek may in fact result from dissimilar processes and exhibit different systemic relationships. However, standard Greek materials illuminate the idiosyncrasies of BJG. The reverse, arguing from BJG to mainstream Greek in the absence of comparable mainstream data, is a risky and methodologically dubious procedure. As Hatzidakis observed, 'die Benutzung dieses Textes zu der Erklärung von syntaktischen, lexikalischen und semasiologischen u. dgl. Erscheinungen des Ngr. nur mit allergrösster Vorsicht geschehen darf.'[62]

The peculiar features of BJG suggest that standard sociolinguistic explanations for Greek language varieties might be insufficient or irrelevant for BJG. The traditional binary view of the history of Greek is that the language can be either 'high', or 'low', or something in between. 'High' is the authoritative variety based on current cultural preferences and ideals in the school curricula: in this way during the Hellenistic period Atticism emerged as an imitation of classical Greek. Throughout late antiquity and Byzantium, the Atticist variety maintained its position, with elements of the LXX Koine elevated to a high status as linguistic markers of the dominant religion. The Church monopolized education and thus

[62] Hatzidakis 1898, 1584.

became the heir of classical, Hellenistic and scriptural literacy. Ultimately, the very same elements paved the way for *kathareuousa* in modern times. Meanwhile, the 'low' variety is uncultured, non-formalized and non-institutionalized. Its definition is apophatic: whatever is not 'high' is 'low'.[63]

This binary opposition has been responsible for the definition of BJG as 'demotic' and 'colloquial'. For Hesseling, any phenomenon that could not be paralleled in literary Greek had a vernacular origin.[64] For Tonnet, the fact that Jewish children did not learn *Psaltiri* and *Octoixos* meant that they did not learn any high register of Greek at all. With some caveats, Joseph subscribed to this view as well. However, whatever may be correct for the language varieties spoken by Greek Christians does not have to hold true for Jewish varieties of Greek. A more nuanced perspective should be adopted.

BJG has the features of both 'high' and 'low'. Linguists agree that 'high', whatever its other characteristics, is a *learnt* non-native register. This condition is certainly fulfilled by BJG: it was acquired during religious instruction in school as a tool for mastering Hebrew Scriptures.[65] As translationese, it was nobody's mother tongue. Its prestige was derived from its use on liturgical occasions and in school, where it was associated with authority. BJG possessed its own classes of morphological, lexical and syntactical markers of 'highness'. Those were phenomena particularly suitable for rendering Hebrew distilled through the mechanisms of calquing/mapping.

What makes BJG 'low'? Every language variety used by Jews in the post-Second Temple period stands in diglossic relationship to Hebrew.[66] BJG is by definition incomparable to Hebrew: it is confined to the initial stages of education, serving an instrumental purpose – to facilitate understanding of the sacred Hebrew texts, with little value of its own. Still, it is not the lowest of all language varieties, since colloquial JG in this system would be even more inferior.

There is an inherent contradiction between the 'high' and 'low' characteristics of BJG: its institutionalization elevates it, but its function lowers it. From a purely didactic viewpoint, the choice of translation technique is hardly important: while the traditional translation equivalents are

[63] On particular difficulties of defining 'vernacular' in Byzantine context see Hinterberger 2006; Manolessou 2008.

[64] See, for example, his reluctant conclusion about the indeclinable ἀνήρ: 'En tout cas le caractère général du texte me force à croire que l'auteur a entendu prononcer ces formes autour de lui' (Hesseling 1897, xlvi).

[65] Belléli 1891, 251–2; de Lange 2012, 380.

[66] Rabin and Alvarez-Péreyre 1981; Fishman 1967.

preferable, any solution that helps to explain the text to a pupil is sufficient. That is, if a dialect form or a neologism is available that can explain Hebrew better than the word of the old traditional Greek *targum* (by being phonetically closer, being linked to the verbal root through a real or imaginary etymology, or having a semantic structure more isomorphic to Hebrew), it is didactically more efficient to use the new form.[67] Similarly, the equivalents must not be completely detached from current usage if they are to remain comprehensible during liturgical performance. Thus, while under the pressure of linguistic and historical changes traditional BJG translations become progressively less useful, their dissolution into the colloquial is constantly impeded by the inertia of the school establishment and the conservatism of the synagogue setting.[68]

Another corollary is that BJG is a poor source for research into contemporaneous colloquial JG. Characterising Jewish Constantinople Greek as 'apparently more conservative … as opposed to the more innovative and more mainstream Orthodox Christian Constantinople Greek' cannot be substantiated on the basis of CP alone.[69] One would need a different corpus of data to prove it, such as letters intended for non-Jewish addressees. Without this, hardly any conclusions are possible about spoken JG.

Unfortunately, the myth of 'archaic JG' has penetrated popular literature and even reference works.[70] Yet the – admittedly very few – data about the modern JG dialect of Ioannina give no reason to characterize it as particularly archaic, while all other Romaniote language varieties disappeared before serious description of them was possible.[71] Consequently, we are dealing with a confusion in which the features of one particular language variety (that of Biblical translations) are projected onto the whole set of language varieties used by a community. Such sweeping generalizations should be avoided. Informed ignorance is certainly preferable to misplaced knowledge.

[67] Cf. Séphiha 1982, 113 on the multi-dialectism of Ladino.

[68] The statement that 'deliberately translating a text into a linguistic form that is not current among the likely users of the translation is self-defeating' (Joseph 2000, 8) reflects modern perceptions about the acceptability of translation rather than those of the sixteenth-century JG communities. For counter-examples see the description of traditional translations in Bunis 1996.

[69] Joseph 2000, 9. [70] See, e.g., Bowman 2010. [71] Krivoruchko 2011.

PART IV

Culture

CHAPTER 11

Philo's knowledge of Hebrew
The meaning of the etymologies

Tessa Rajak

The relationship between knowledge and use of the Hebrew language and the long-lived but often elusive Jewish–Greek tradition has been central to Nicholas de Lange's writing and thought.[1] We are all the beneficiaries of his dual preoccupation, on the one hand with the problem of how, in late antiquity and beyond, the Greek and Latin-speaking Jewish diasporas became Hebraized (or re-Hebraized) and Rabbinized, and on the other hand with tracing continuity in the centuries-long and rich Greek–Jewish culture into the Christian era and through the Byzantine period. Much of my work is indebted to his insistence on that continuity.

It is in this spirit that I approach an old problem, the question of Philo of Alexandria's apparent lack of Hebrew knowledge, and in particular the evidence drawn from his Hebrew-derived etymologies.[2] In the context of Philo's signal contribution to the exegesis of the Septuagint version, and of his profound engagement with Platonic thought, the question may seem marginal; all the more so, since, as we shall see, a definitive answer is unattainable. Yet the subject is important for our understanding of Alexandrian Judaism. The question of Philo's knowledge or ignorance of Hebrew impacts upon our view of the reception of the Greek Bible, our assessment of Alexandrian Jewry's contact with religious developments in Palestine, and our view of Jewish Hellenism and of the hybrid identity of Greek-speaking Jews (or at least that of their social and literary elite). It is also fundamental for any history of the Hebrew language, and for any attempt to get closer to the complex persona of Philo himself.

Scholarship has greatly advanced in all these areas. I would suggest that a consistent and enduring tendency, from which we are now emerging, to claim Judaism and Hellenism as cultural opposites, probably contributed to

[1] For this topic, see especially de Lange 1996b.

[2] Elements of this chapter were presented to the International Septuaginta Deutsch Meeting in Wuppertal, 2009, and to the Philo group of the Society of Biblical Literature in 2010.

the readiness of commentators to divorce Philo from the Hebraic. From the Hellenistic world itself came the conceptualization of a fundamental divide that was to be significant in constructions of Jewish identity, of Christian origins, and of European civilization. Greeks stand for one set of values – reason, enquiry, aesthetics, physicality, frivolity – and Jews for contrasting qualities – morality, responsibility, law, seriousness, the transcendent. Philo was the towering figure in Hellenistic Judaism. Philo's oeuvre was the culmination of some three centuries of development of Judaism and of Jewish intellectual life conducted in a Greek milieu, in the Greek language, and in the context of a high Greek culture. He was evidently its most prolific and its most distinguished exponent; and Christian transmission has ensured that much of his output survives. The balance between Greek philosophy and Jewish tradition in his writing elicits different readings; and the question divides and polarizes the two elements, which can encourage a simplistic judgement on his linguistic capacities, predisposing observers to an unsubtle approach – either one thing or the other, but not both.

Against this background, I wish to reopen this question, showing how often judgements relating to it are based upon shaky foundations, and arguing that much more can be said on the subject, even if certainty is unattainable.

Alexandria

It is generally held that Hebrew was virtually forgotten in Alexandrian Jewry within a generation or two of Jewish settlement in Alexander's new city in Egypt; and it is perhaps easy to suppose that the Jews could manage without it. A few scholars have stood back from this assumption.[3] It is admitted that Aramaic may have lasted longer, as witnessed by a handful of surviving Jewish gravestones from the city's necropolis, but essentially the political, cultural and social power of the Greek language was overwhelming, in this most Hellenizing of cities.

It is, moreover, widely assumed that the Torah translation into Greek must have been undertaken by Jews to remedy this ignorance – why else, after all? 'Because the Hebrew was no longer understood', it is asserted. There are, however, many other good reasons.[4] Ownership of their sacred scriptures in Greek could help to position the Jewish minority advantageously in relation to the Greek and Roman cultural

[3] To be noted are Treu 1973; Hengel 1974, I, 62 and 101; Kasher 1985, 5; Rajak 2009, 149–50.

[4] Set out at length in Rajak 2009, ch. 4; see too Carleton Paget in this volume.

imperialisms under which they fell; but it also enabled this minority to have things two ways, both to play and not to play the game, both to take account of the prevailing power-structure, engaging in a degree of measured acculturation, and also, quietly, but persistently, to assert their underlying independence via the continuing cultivation of their own literature and the way of life it enshrined. In the light of new work on the social role of translation, we can see how the Septuagint achieved accommodation for a minority group and how the nature and uses of the translation enabled them to define their own dual identity and to retain control over their essential values in relation to the prevailing powers. Translations, which can of course be of many different kinds, serve to build bridges in a multicultural society, to facilitate dual or multiple affiliations. Put more simply, for users of a translation both sides of the equation are likely to carry weight: their world will embrace not just the target but also the source language. Ptolemy II's supposed role in instigating the translation is a different matter, which does not concern us, although I am inclined to believe that there is some basis to the tradition.

Philo

Philo lived some two hundred years after the Torah translation. A fortiori, it has been supposed that he would have no familiarity with Hebrew. And indeed, before us lie his numerous surviving disquisitions, all of them written originally in Greek, and consisting of exegesis of that Torah translation and not of the Hebrew original – apart from a large and notable collection of Hebrew etymologies.

It is unsurprising that when the question of Philo's Hebrew is discussed, the matter is treated as settled: it is 'almost a dogma', as David Daube has written,[5] that Philo had no Hebrew at all, or at any rate so little as to be of no significance. This is evident even among those strongly interested in relevant aspects of Philo, including Lester Grabbe, whose study of Philo's etymologies I shall shortly be discussing.[6] Among earlier scholars, the issue was a live one.[7] But even then, only a few ventured to stand against the majority opinion. Strikingly, Harry Wolfson argued the minority case from social realities, claiming that the burden is on those

[5] Daube 1992, 213. [6] E.g., Grabbe 1988, 112, 113.

[7] See especially Nikiprowetzky 1977, 50–97. For a bibliography and an accompanying overview, see Birnbaum 1996, 68–70, and nn. 16–19.

who argue that Philo lacked all knowledge of Hebrew:[8] 'It is true indeed', he wrote, 'that the Alexandrian Jews found it difficult to preserve the knowledge of Hebrew as the common possession of all the people, but there can be no doubt that provision for instruction in that language was made by them and that the more learned among them had a knowledge of it.' Suzanne Daniel also argued that Philo must have known Hebrew, arguing from familiarity with material found in the Palestinian halakhah and convinced that such material could not have been transmitted at this stage (whether orally or in writing) in any other language.[9] Both scholars admitted that they were moved by general considerations and possibly by instinct, in the absence of clinching positive evidence. Daniel's case, based on the presence of proto-rabbinic material in Philo, today seems weaker than it once did in the face of the near certainty that such material was disseminated during the Second Temple period not in written form but as oral tradition; in such a process transfer across language boundaries is to be expected.[10] What remains valuable, however, is the insistence of these scholars that, in the absence of conclusive proof, and in the light of the known complexities of Jewish diaspora cultures, the question of Philo's linguistic knowledge should remain open.

The negative case can seem overwhelming. Various scholars have found the matter settled by Philo's choice to do his exegetical activity on the basis of Greek. Philo has not once been trapped consulting, referring to or drawing upon any comparison with the Hebrew text anywhere in his commentaries.[11]

Yet a look below the surface allows us to appreciate that, precisely because Philo's project is what it is, an application of Middle-Platonic thought to biblical exegesis according to allegorical techniques established by predecessors such as Aristoboulos, he operates within strict constraints and must obey certain rules. While it might be tempting to suggest that, if the Hebrew language had so little significance within Philo's ambitious literary endeavours, the ultimately unanswerable question of his Hebrew knowledge becomes trivial, that is far from the case, when intellectual

[8] Wolfson 1947, I: 89.

[9] Sandmel 1978, 110; Daniel 1967. Before Daniel, Belkin 1940, 35–6, and Mantel had taken a similar view: see Nikiprowetzky 1977, 82 n. 18. We may also add Daube 1992, 213–18, who responds to the consensus simply with 'I wonder', and proceeds to identify what may be a small Greek–Hebrew pun in Philo's interpretation of circumcision.

[10] Naomi Cohen 1987 studies a number of interpretations common to Philo and the Rabbis, concluding that the same traditions may have circulated both in Hebrew/Aramaic and in Greek.

[11] Sandmel 1978. Cf. Nikiprowetzky 1977, 50–96. It is fair to add that we never find Philo comparing Greek versions or considering Greek readings either.

biography and cultural history are written on the basis of a presumed negative. In querying the consensus, I shall rely mainly on a reconsideration of the etymologies, and it is worth pointing out at the outset that the very use of etymologies from the Hebrew suggests that the Hebrew source remained an object of reverence, the perceived authority for Philo. And indeed it mattered that Hebrew was the primal language, for it was important to him that Adam had given perfect names, i.e. Hebrew names (though he does not actually specify), to everything in the world (*Opif.* 148–50). It might reasonably be suggested that such a demonstration of reverence is unlikely to have remained purely academic: if anyone could acquire Hebrew in Alexandria it was surely Philo, while around him, the Septuagint versions were undoubtedly still being added to, or revised and corrected, according to the Hebrew text, presumably in part by local scholars. Finally, we must remember that it was his own choice to turn to the original for the explanation of names: had he wanted simply to etymologize people and places, he could have regularly performed the operation via their Greek names, as he did on occasion. And if that were problematic, why play the etymological game at all? It was just one tool in an extensive armoury available to him.

The etymologies

There stands one big exception to the absence of Hebrew in Philonic exegesis, and that lies in those 166 etymologies of biblical names deployed by Philo as an exegetical tool. Here, after all, is a large repository of Hebrew vocabulary, potentially useful, but also open to misapplication. Some of Philo's etymologizing is obvious, some of it recondite, some of it garbled; but most of it rests on Hebrew meanings, and there are quite a lot of them. Discussion of Philo's knowledge of Hebrew has necessarily revolved around those etymologies. But while they have recently been accorded fine treatment from various angles, the emphasis has fallen mainly on their Greek philosophical antecedents, their specific role in Philonic allegory, and even their rabbinic parallels.[12] Grabbe's monograph provides a comprehensive analysis, which has facilitated all subsequent work on Philo's etymologies. Grabbe, in turn, drew on a much older literature, especially Carl Siegfried's spadework of 1863.[13] But when it comes to our precise

[12] See the collection of papers in *Studia Philonica Annual* 16, 2004.

[13] Siegfried 1863, whose assessment of Philo's Hebrew was not wholly negative.

question, what the etymologies tell us about Philo's Hebrew knowledge, the argumentation remains rather less rigorous.[14]

It is first necessary to grasp the nature of the Philonic etymologies and the benefit that the exegete derives from them. Ancient etymology involved relating the individual syllables or parts of the names of people, real or mythological, or of geographical features, or, less often, of things, to words whose meaning was plain, and from this deriving a meaning for the primary name. That meaning or significance may be of purely antiquarian interest, but more often it will have a function within the text where the etymology appears. This can further pave the way to a symbolic reading of the function or character of the name's holder, although not necessarily. In the Hebrew Bible, simple etymologies of the names of people or places are quite frequent. A large cluster is to be found in Genesis 1–11. We can all think of some well-known cases: Eliezer is 'God is my help' (Gen. 18:4); Izhak comes from *zahak*, to laugh (Gen. 21:3–6); Israel is 'he who struggled against God' as well as against man (Gen. 32:29); Moshe is from *mashach* (Exod. 2:10). Implicitly, Adam is etymologized from *adamah*, earth (Gen. 2:7) and Jacob from the heel which he held on to (Gen. 25:26).[15]

In Greek writing the process was most often applied to the names and epithets of divinities and it has been associated with a supposed school of Stoic allegorizing.[16] The most consistent allegorizers of Greek literature were Heraclitus in his *Quaestiones homericae* (sometimes referred to as Pseudo-Heraclitus, and thus by Grabbe) and Cornutus in his *Theologiae graecae compendium*; both appear to belong, roughly, to the era of Philo. A little later, in the age of Josephus, Plutarch's use of this technique in his *On Isis and Osiris* is interesting, because he applies it also to the names of Egyptian deities (while admitting that he did not know the Egyptian language). Thus the name of Isis is linked to ἵεσθαι, to hasten, but her other names are given as Muth, Athuri and Methuer, and these are assigned supposed meanings in Egyptian (374B–375C). The name of the deity Seth/Typhon is interpreted in a fashion that sounds a little Philonic, though the interpretation remains rooted in the physical world:

> Typhon is the element of the soul which is passionate … and the element of the corporeal which is subject to death, disease and confusion through bad seasons, imperfect coalescences of the air, eclipses of the sun, and disappearances of the moon, which are in the manner of sallies and rebellions

[14] I have not seen the Tel Aviv University thesis of C. Schur 1991.
[15] Though there is an alternative etymology from *akav*, to supplant.
[16] Long 1997, has questioned the link with Stoic allegory.

> by Typhon, and this is implied by the name Seth … for it denotes the overpowering and violent … frequent return and overleaping (371B).

At least one Roman intellectual derided the whole business: Seneca, himself a Stoic, in *de Beneficiis* 1.3, mocked one of the founders of Stoicism, Chrysippus, for claiming that the names of the Three Graces could have anything to do with what it means to give and receive a *beneficium*, a benefit, and especially for asserting that their mother, Eurynome, is so called because the distribution of benefits equates with a 'legacy that is spread around widely'. Rabbinic etymologies too have a playful side. Philo, by contrast, is convinced that the procedure has profound validity. But even he sometimes engages in it as an act of exegetical ingenuity, something which is easily forgotten.

The key point for our purpose is that, while working somewhat in the fashion of Greek allegorizers (whether Stoic or not), Philo relies for the vast majority of cases not on Greek but on Hebrew meanings. He gives just a handful of Greek etymologies, that is to say, Greek explained in terms of Greek, as though there was no underlying Hebrew: there are nine for proper names (Grabbe lists only three of them) and a longer list for Greek words, which is a different matter. The Greek in such cases is simple: Pheison, the river of paradise, is linked with φείδεσθαι, to spare, because prudence guards the soul from deeds of wrong; while the river Tigris is from the Greek for 'tiger', the animal that above others manifests self-control (both at *Leg.* 1.66 ff.); Peitho, Pharaoh's Pithom, from πείθειν, to persuade, linked with the human mind (*Somn.* 1.77).

The rough distribution of etymologies that can be deduced from Grabbe's *index locorum* reveals that while etymologies are widespread, they appear mainly in the works that belong to the works nowadays assigned to the Allegorical Commentary, and, moreover, they have a strikingly high density in just a few of those, namely *Legum Allegoriae*, *de Posteritate Caini*, *de Congressu Quaerendae Eruditionis Gratia* and *Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesin.* Nevertheless, we also find Hebrew etymologies in the less technical works often assigned by Philo nic scholars to the sequence called the Exposition of the Law, and they are present, too, in the fragmentary *Questions and Answers* on Genesis and Exodus.

In a schema slightly adapted from that of David Runia, who has helpfully itemized the four components of the most common type of Philonic etymological interpretation,[17] I distinguish the following:

(a) a Hebrew word, usually a proper noun;

[17] Runia 2004.

(b) a Greek translation of that Hebrew word, or of the elements in a breakdown of that word, if they are several;
(c) the moral symbolism represented by those meanings;
(d) the justification of that symbolism in terms of a larger interpretative scheme.

To this we might add another component of the interpretation, the words that introduce it. Philo operates with a selection of distinctive interpretative formulae that tell us a full-blown etymology is coming: the Greek terms ἑρμηνεύεσθαι (a term with various shades of meaning, from 'translate' to 'interpret'), καλεῖσθαι, μεταληφθείς εἶναι or λέγεσθαι.[18] Grabbe sees in the regular use of these formulae a conscious device to announce a formal etymology; I wonder, however, exactly why Philo would have wished to demarcate formal etymologies from those occasional interpretations that involve less than full-blown etymological unpacking and application. But to ask this is really to ask how Philonic etymology is articulated with Philonic allegory – a topic worthy of further exploration.

Many of Philo's Hebrew etymologies are straightforward in translation terms, however elaborate the allegory based upon them: Jerusalem means 'vision of peace', 'Jordan' means 'descent', Benjamin means 'son of days'. Judah means 'praise to the Lord', or, as Philo likes to put it, 'man of thanksgiving', with such frequency that we could argue that the etymology determined the construction of the symbolism around Judah and the entire role he plays in Philo's interpretative webs.

Other etymologies seem more far-fetched, but still well within the conventions of such etymologizing. Thus for example, Zebulon, 'night's flowing', is equated with 'light', visible when night has flowed away (*Somn.* 2.30–42).[19] Here, by contrast with the previous example, it looks as though the connection between etymology and interpretation is too remote for Philo's surrounding idea to have sprung from the etymology; rather the etymology seems to have been picked to cohere with what he wanted to say.

Some etymologies find widespread agreement in other types of source. A very few of them, apart from those that are biblical, overlap with etymologies in Josephus (see below); a few coincide with rabbinic interpretations; and a number with patristic etymologies, a number of which were based on Philo, a debt acknowledged by Jerome in the preface to his *Liber interpretationis hebraicarum nominum* – though Jerome might have been misled about the authorship of his material.[20] Etymologies with

[18] These are quantified in Grabbe 1988, 42.
[19] On the sons of Jacob, Grabbe 1988, 33–7.
[20] *Corpus Christianorum, series latina* 72 (Jerome cites Origen), 59–60. On Jerome's Hebrew philology, see Graves 2007.

widespread parallels are Heshbon, Greek Ἐσεβών, said to mean 'reckoning', and thence applied to man's 'dim reasonings' (*Leg.* 3.226); with Amalek, Ἀμαλήκ, from *'am* and the root *lqq*, and thence applied to 'a passion which eats out the whole soul and licks it out, leaving behind no seed or spark of virtue' (*Leg.* 3.186, and also *Congr.* 55); and with Nimrod, Greek Νεβρώδ, 'desertion', i.e. 'rebellion' (*Gig.* 66. cf. *QG* 2.82).[21]

Some Philonic etymologies differ strikingly from rabbinic interpretations but coincide with patristic etymologies, as for example Er (son of Judah), Greek Εἴρ, for Philo derived from 'skin', δερμάτινον, leathery, *Leg.* 3.69 (cf. *Post.* 180, but for *Gen. Rab.* 85.4 from the verb meaning 'to be removed'); or Aharon, Greek Ἀαρών, derived from *har*¸ mountain, to give 'reason whose thoughts are lofty and sublime' (*Ebr.* 128), as in patristic sources, but not from 'to conceive', as at *Exod. Rab.* 26.1.

Yet again, there are etymologies that are confined, in the surviving literature, to Philo alone: thus, the derivation of the name of the Ammonite people Ἀμμανῖται, from Ben Ammi is common enough, but Philo then takes Ammi to be derived not from 'people' or 'nation' but from *'em*, mother, so that Ammonite means ἐκ τῆς μητρός, denoting (misogynistically) 'those who derive their nature from sense-perception, their mother' (*Leg.* 3.81). In another place, however (*QG* 4.58), the more obvious 'son of my people' is offered.

A few of Philo's etymologies build on those already offered by the Bible. But we should understand that Philo does not regard himself as bound by scriptural explanations, from which he can sometimes be found differing.

Evidently, a considerable familiarity with Hebrew would be required were such material to be fresh-minted, given the small proportion of these interpretations that can be extracted from the Septuagint, and given the manner in which they are exploited.[22]

Yet everything would look different were Philo's etymologizing to turn out not to have been his independent work. And there is reason to think that he was assisted by one or more pre-prepared name lists (*onomastika*) or glossaries; scholars have without good reason thought in terms of just one such source, but it is possible that there were several. No source of Philo's etymologies survives, but well-known later examples are supplied by Jerome's book of interpretations of Hebrew names, while Eusebius compiled a similar work.[23] Papyrus fragments from Oxyrhynchus (P.Oxy.

[21] For rabbinic parallels to the latter, see Alexander 2004.
[22] For a full analytical study, see Grabbe 1988, with comprehensive individual studies in Part II. Cf. Alexander 2004, on rabbinic etymologizing of names.
[23] For Eusebius' etymologies in the light of parallel material, see Wutz 1914–15.

36.2745), carrying a list of eighteen Hebrew biblical names in Greek transliteration beginning with the letter 'i' (iota), together with their meanings explained in Greek, have been taken to reproduce a Hellenistic compilation based on the Septuagint, even if they were probably written after Philo's time. David Rokéah believes that this list contains the actual material that Philo used, but since there is scarcely any overlap with Philo, the claim is unwarranted.[24] Still, this is significant evidence for how Philo's source might have looked. Indeed, Grabbe attempts to reconstruct a hypothetical, lost document of this kind out of Philo's exegetical data.

Yehoshua Amir attempted to establish the use of such an aid, and his views have generally been found persuasive.[25] Amir observed that Philo's etymology for the name Ιοθόρ is 'superfluous', and he offers the interpretation *perissos* (περισσός) (*Mut.* 103; *Agr.* 43). But when Philo goes on to explain how Jethro was excessive, he picks up the term in the Attic form, *perittos* (περιττός), which corresponds to his usual practice. Amir concludes: 'this exchange of dialect for a writer so strict about his writing style is unreasonable unless Philo found περισσός as a ready-made translation … it is likely that he had this before his eyes in writing.' This sounds convincing, in the absence of evidence of any textual variants that might reflect scribal adjustments to Philo's dialectal forms, but it falls short of proof. The inconsistency might be otherwise explained by suggesting that περισσός was the established everyday form within the contemporary Koine Greek of Alexandria, appropriate therefore to a free-standing definition, but that Philo reverted to the high Attic form when he resumed the flow of his literary creation. Even more pertinent might be the known tendency of medieval scribes to substitute Attic for non-Attic forms, something which a very early copyist may well have done, but inconsistently. But even supposing Amir be right, the limitations of his demonstration must be stressed:

1 Whether or not an author knows Hebrew, he might choose to avail himself of a scholarly aid. It would be laborious to generate an entire new repertoire of explanations. Philo had available a tradition which could give extra validity to his preferred interpretations and that was extremely important in a search for hidden meanings and ultimate truths.
2 An author might invoke the aid of an *onomastikon* on some occasions, but not on others. Amir deals with this possibility only by saying 'it is difficult to imagine that such a document contained his interpretation of the name Jethro alone and not also the rest of the explanation

[24] Rokéah 1968; Rokéah 1970. [25] Amir 1961, translated in Grabbe 1988, appendix 2.

of names which Philo depends on'. But the question is not how many names the document may have contained, but how Philo needed to and chose to use the available information. The second of these two contentions gains telling support from the practice of Philo's successor as interpreter of the Bible in Greek, namely Flavius Josephus. I have argued that Josephus' rewritten Bible, in *Antiquities* 1–12, seemingly dependent upon both Hebrew and Greek versions, shows signs of the use of an *onomastikon*, brought into play to assist him at difficult points in the work of translation, and especially for *termini technici*, for various kinds of *realia* and for geographical vocabulary.[26] At issue are also some Greek renderings of Hebrew proper names. Josephus tells us (*Ant.* 1.129) that he has a special policy on the matter, and that he makes his names decline, in order that they should look Greek and sound euphonious. In fact this is not universally the case (the name of Moses does decline). But, terminations apart, his Graecized names show considerable agreement with LXX. Striking instances are the rendering of Joseph's Egyptian name, Zaphenath-Paneah (a name whose Greek equivalent does not readily spring to mind!) as Ψονθομφάνηχ(ον) (Gen. 41:45; *Ant.* 2.91) or (more obviously) φεισών for Pishon, the river of Paradise (Gen. 2:11; *Ant.* 1.38). Josephus also offers etymologies of biblical names; but these usually follow the Bible, and are rarely as unexpected as Philo's; nor does he offer lists of alternatives as does Jerome. Therefore in this field he did not require much assistance; but some consultation may still be indicated by coincidence with LXX, and even occasionally with Philo. I should add that etymological exegesis that surfaces later, in the Aramaic targums, and in Palestinian midrash, could have been known already to Josephus. Josephus' (not too numerous) etymologies would repay full analysis. My purpose in bringing them forward here has been to illustrate how a writer whose knowledge of Hebrew cannot be doubted seems still to have called upon lexical aids for specific, clearly defined purposes.

Catching Philo out

To argue, then, from the apparent use of an *onomastikon* that Philo did not understand the Hebrew that he was transcribing necessitates several further steps. To begin to think about drawing conclusions we need at the very least to catch Philo reproducing a patent scribal error or else evincing some gross

[26] The discussion is revisited in a forthcoming paper. For the scope of the *onomastika*, see the study by Wutz 1914–15.

misunderstanding of what is in front of him. Grabbe is at pains to uncover cases of 'certain scribal errors which would mislead an exegete unable to consult the Hebrew text'.[27] To count as such an instance, it is not enough that an interpretation be odd or strained or baffling to us, or even nonsensical. It has proved all too easy to regard 'bad etymologies' as indicators of bad Hebrew.[28] For ancient etymologizing was concerned with decoding and not with scientific investigation; it was not a branch of philology but a way of extracting meaning from within names (whether for the purpose of allegory or simply for a more ordinary explanation of the physical world).[29] Syllables could be divided in odd ways or missed out altogether; inversions or visual similarities were perfectly valid; one consonant might be substituted for another; letters might go missing; syntax could be distorted or one form be replaced with another. Multiple etymologies of a single name or word were definitely allowed; they were entertained by Philo in spite of the beautiful passage in *Opif.* 148–150 (cf. *Leg.* 2.14–15) where he endorses Moses' ascription to Adam of names for everything in the world, on the grounds that those names are in all cases perfectly apposite, fully reflecting the real nature of what is named. These various practices need not demonstrate the highest level of linguistic proficiency. Indeed, as Grabbe observes, limited knowledge of how Hebrew worked allowed more room for manoeuvre. And all the time, a large number of Hebrew terms were required by an interpreter who sought to incorporate etymology into the fabric of his exegesis. Allowing for all this, possible indicative errors will be few and far between, and uncontroversial cases even rarer.

I examine here four cases, whose interpretation, as proposed in Grabbe's study, has led to an apparently persuasive charge of gross ignorance on Philo's part. In each case, I suggest that an alternative interpretation is open to us and offers a more straightforward solution.

1 Aithiopia (Αἰθιοπία) is etymologized as meaning ταπείνωσις, 'lowness', 'baseness' (*Leg.* 1.68). How could this have come about? In Greek, as is well known, the Ethiopians are those with burnt faces. A confusion is ingeniously suggested between the country's Hebrew name, 'Kush', and the Hebrew verb *rush*, or *rish*, to be in want. The two letters *kaf* and *resh* are admittedly easily confused, and this would seem to be just the kind of error that anyone acquainted with the familiar Hebrew name for Aithiopia is most unlikely to have made or even transcribed from a

[27] Grabbe 1988, 113. [28] For this argument see Hanson 1967.

[29] See Alexander 2004, 169–71. Rabbinic etymologies too may be derived from faulty linguistic analysis, but no one would accuse the Rabbis of not knowing Hebrew.

defective source. One might, however, look in a different direction, noting that Philo's interpretation, which is part of his reading of the name of the river Geon, runs: 'it encompasses and beleaguers Ethiopia, whose name, interpreted (ἑρμηνευθέν) is lowness, and cowardice is a low thing, while courage is a foe to lowness and cowardice.' The question arises whether we might not have here, in shortened form, another Greek-language based etymology, like those of Tigris and Pheison in the same passage. For in the Aristotelian physiognomic literature, dark skin indicates cowardice, and the Ethiopians, the people of the burnt faces, are the first example, with the Egyptians as the second one.[30] The physiognomic literature was influential in the Hellenistic period, so that Philo could reasonably say that the interpretation of the Ethiopians' name is cowardice and could expect to be understood. We may recall that Nimrod, whose name for Philo means 'desertion' (from the Hebrew *mrd*), and who is described as a Cushite (*QG* 2.82), appears to have the meaning of his name conflated with the physiognomic meaning of 'Ethiopian'. Thus Cush-Rush falls away.

2 Sheshai, one of the sons of Anak killed in Hebron by Caleb according to Num. 13:22, Josh. 15:14 and Judg. 1:10, is etymologized as ἐκτός μου, 'outside myself' (*Post.* 6.1). This looks suspiciously like a misunderstanding of ἕκτος, sixth, which is in fact a translation of the Hebrew *sheshi*.[31] 'The fact that Philo could misread it as he does', writes Grabbe, 'is another indication that he had little knowledge of Hebrew.' But is it? Working from the Septuagint Greek, Philo would have seen the name in its Greek form, not as Sheshai, but as Σε(σ)σι. The character is obscure. In the Torah, he makes just one appearance. Anyone might forget his Hebrew name, even if he had once known it. Philo may be held, responsible, then, for misreading an earlier etymology from the Hebrew, but not for ignorance.

3 Shifra, the midwife of the Hebrews of Exod. 1:15 is called Sepphorah (Σεπφωρα) in LXX, just like Zipporah, the wife of Moses; and Philo, it is claimed, wrongly etymologizes Shifra as 'bird', ὀρνίθιον, at *Her.* 128 (cf. *Cher.* 41 for the same etymology for Zipporah). But, given the identity of the names Shifra and Zipporah in Greek, this may simply be understood as another Greek-based etymology, quite allowable within the flexible rules of this exercise, if the meaning extracted could serve Philo's hermeneutic purposes better.

[30] Isaac 2004, 151 and n. 385.

[31] Grabbe 1988 follows a line of earlier interpreters, notably Wutz 1914–15 and Stein 1929.

4 Here we have not a case of error but of a seemingly indicative absence of Hebrew. If we compare the following two analyses from Grabbe, each of them, again, involving one of the rare Greek etymologies, we observe that the first of them is taken as a pointer to Philo's ignorance of Hebrew. Whatever the strength of this claim, what is significant is that the second argument undercuts the first.

(a) *Leg.* 1.63–87. Explaining the division of the main river of the Garden of Eden into four, Philo deploys a cluster of etymologies linked to the virtues. But the name of the river Tigris, as we have seen, is not given in Hebrew, but rather the interpretation is based on the Greek: the tiger is the animal hardest to tame and Tigris denotes σωφροσύνη, self-control, over against the pleasure-loving Assyrians. A contrast is drawn with Josephus who, in addition to the Greek name Tigris for the river, gives the Hebrew name *hiddeqel*, which he etymologizes via *had*, sharp, and *dak*, thin: 'if Philo were able to consult the Hebrew text, one would have expected a Hebrew etymology of the Tigris river', says Grabbe.

(b) *Congr.* 24–33. Of Jacob's wives, Leah represents the smooth movement to health, with an implied etymology from the Greek λεῖα. Grabbe writes: 'Philo knew a Hebrew etymology for Leah because he gives it more than once, but he does not use it here. Why? Several explanations are possible, but the most likely is that it simply did not fit his pre-conceived scheme whereas a Greek play on words easily did … Elsewhere, though, and perhaps even here, Philo shows great ingenuity in fitting etymologies into a scheme in which there is no pre-existent niche.' So this case, where Philo uses the Greek but demonstrates elsewhere that he does know the Hebrew as well, entirely undercuts the claim made about the first case above, that a choice of Greek implies ignorance of a Hebrew alternative.

It is paradoxical that in three out of these four cases that are crucial to Grabbe and also to those others who insist that Philo's linguistic abilities confined him to the Greek, a legitimate decision to operate with the Greek rather than the Hebrew has been disregarded or misjudged. It is also paradoxical that Grabbe holds Philo's models for his etymologies to be almost exclusively found in Greek thought and not in the Jewish sphere.

These cases are sufficient to give food for thought. But is there any hope of finding positive proof of Philo operating with Hebrew, either in the etymologies or elsewhere? The most fruitful way forward will be to identify and investigate those etymologies where Philo offers an interpretation

that is integrated with, and integral to his exegesis, a building block of the allegorical system: all the better if the etymology is an unexpected one and unparalleled in any other surviving source (other, perhaps, than a patristic author likely to have derived his interpretation precisely from a reading of Philo). Grabbe was intrigued by the question of what came first for Philo – an etymology around which he had to fit his interpretation of a character, or rather an edifice of interpretation to which he then had to accommodate a known etymology. The answer in the end is likely to be that it is sometimes one way and sometimes the other, etymologizing being a dynamic and creative part of interpretation for Philo, and not a formalistic or mechanical procedure.

It has been admitted on all sides that for Philo etymologizing from the Hebrew is far more than mere adornment. Of course, for many, even the most embedded etymologies will have come straight out of the *onomastikon* that is Philo's lost source. That etymology, then, will have been created by a different Greek-speaking Jew, presumably in Alexandria. It is recognized that this Jew, for all the 'errors' that might be pinned onto him, will need to have had a good facility with the Hebrew language; but also much more. Goulet[32] was right to maintain that a mere word list would not have sufficed for Philo to construct from his etymologies the fairly coherent symbolic system that runs through his writing; but Goulet's thesis is that Philo depended on an extended pre-Philonic allegorical text for much of his invention. Yet if Hebrew etymologies are found to be inextricable from the web of Philo's allegorical interpretation of a particular passage, is it not simpler to suggest that the mind of the master himself might be responsible? And if that were so, that capacious mind will have included among its furnishings a decent knowledge of the original language. The extraordinary creation that is Philonic allegory still has secrets to yield. The definitive answer to our linguistic question may remain elusive, but that is no reason not to press enquire.

[32] Goulet 1991.

CHAPTER 12

The plain and laughter *The hermeneutical function of the sign in Philo of Alexandria*

Francis Schmidt

In Philo, the word 'sign' (σημεῖον) takes on very different meanings.[1] The noun σημεῖον can mean 'point', in the mathematical sense of the term, in opposition to a line, surface or volume;[2] it can refer to a 'symptom' in the medical sense;[3] often, it is associated with 'wonders', especially in the phrase 'signs and wonders', referring to the manifestations of divine power for the people in the desert.[4] Elsewhere the word has the meaning of 'proof' or 'clue'.[5] The phenomenon which I want to consider is those places where σημεῖον is defined as a 'manifest sign of a hidden reality'. Often implicit,[6] this meaning is explained in at least two passages in Philo's work, namely in his commentary on two verses of the Septuagint. First, 'Cain said to Abel his brother: Let us make our way to the plain' (*Det.* 1; Gen. 4:8).[7] What are Cain's intentions? To provoke his brother and to seize him: 'for, drawing our conclusions about things that are obscure (περὶ τῶν ἀδήλων) from things that are manifest (ἀπὸ τῶν προφανῶν), we say that the plain, the rendezvous to which he summons him, is a sign of contest and desperate battle' (*Det.* 1). Second, in another context, when he alludes to Sara's statement at the birth of her son: 'the Lord has made

[1] I am grateful to Liliane Vana for her suggestions and critical observations. I also want to thanks Monique Cuany, who translated this chapter. The Greek text of Philo's treatises used in this piece are from R. Arnaldez, J. Pouilloux and Cl. Montdésert, eds, *Les Œuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie* (Paris: Cerf, 1961–2). The English translation, sometimes slightly modified, is from *Philo* (trans. by F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker *et al.*; 12 vols. LCL (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1929–62).

[2] For σημεῖον in the mathematical sense, see: *Congr.* 146, 147; *Dec.* 24–6; *Mos.* 2.115; *Opif.* 49, 98, 102; *Somn.* 1.187.

[3] In the medical sense: *Det.* 43.

[4] Signs and wonders: *Aet.* 2; *Spec.* 2.189; 218; *Migr.* 68; *Mos.* 1.76–7; 95; 178; 210.

[5] With the meaning of 'proof', 'clue': *Aet.* 23, 33, 122; *Spec.* 1.164; *Mos.* 1.269; 2.18, *Mut.* 164; *Prob.* 39, 89; *Prov.* II.26.

[6] On the occurrences of σημεῖον with the implicit meaning of 'manifest sign of a hidden reality', see below, note 21.

[7] 'Let us make our way to the plain' does not appear in the Hebrew text. LXX: Διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πεδίον; Philo, *Det.* 1: Διέλθωμεν ἐπὶ τὸ πεδίον.

laughter for me' (Gen. 21:6), Philo comments: 'For his name would be in Greek, γέλως, 'laughter' … laughter is the outward and bodily sign of the unseen joy in the mind' (γέλως δὲ σημεῖον ἐπὶ τοῦ σώματος φανερὸν ἀφανοῦς τῆς κατὰ διάνοιαν χαρᾶς ἐστι) (*Praem.* 31).[8]

Three issues arise from this theme. (1) We know that during the Hellenistic period philosophical schools elaborated different theories of the sign, a subject about which Epicureans and Stoics especially disagreed. Does the Philonic definition of the sign subscribe to one particular theory? And if so, to which one? (2) Any reader of Philo knows that his biblical commentaries mostly connect a literal reading – whose purpose is to examine the 'visible content' – with an allegorical reading – which intends to reveal the 'invisible content'. Starting from Philo's commentaries on narrative texts (or *historica*), I will make a few observations on the function of the σημεῖον and other related terms, especially σύμβολον, in connecting those two levels of exegesis. (3) Finally, moving to Philo's commentaries on legislative texts (or *nomothetica*), I will examine the reasons for the absence of the notion of 'sign' in those commentaries, to be replaced by the idea of 'symbol'.

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1. The Epicurean Philodemus of Gadara wrote the treatise *De signis* whose final thirty-eight columns have been preserved in Papyrus Herculanum 1065.[9] Written in Italy around the middle of the first century BC, the work presents the reader with three Epicurean philosophers who answer Stoic objections on the highly disputed topic of 'signs and inferences'.[10] In the philosophical schools after Aristotle, the sign took on a radically new status. Indeed, it has been said that for the Stoics just as for the Epicureans, the sign represented 'la procédure standard pour le passage du connu à l'inconnu'.[11] But if the Stoa and the Garden agreed that the sign was a logical tool leading from the 'clear' and 'manifest' (πρόδηλα) to the 'obscure' and 'non-manifest' (ἄδηλα), they disagreed on how the latter could be inferred from the former. Indeed, their opinion differed concerning the nature of the sign and the mode of inference (σημείωσις).

[8] See the explicit quotation of Gen. 21:6 (LXX) in *Det.* 123: γέλωτά μοι ἐποίησε κύριος; and the variant reading in *Leg.* 3.219 and *Mut.* 137: γέλωτα ἐποίησέ μοι ὁ κύριος.

[9] On ancient theories of the sign, see Manetti 1993. On the 'philosophy' of the sign among Stoics, see Verbeke 2006, 261–81 (with an updated bibliography, 281–2). The witness of the *De signis* of Philodemus of Gadara has been recently studied by Delattre 2005, 13–28.

[10] On the reading of the incomplete *subscriptio*, περὶ σημείων … καὶ σημειώσεων, see Delattre 2005, 14–15.

[11] Manetti 1993, 99; Pellegrin 1997, 554–5.

While Epicureans considered the sign to be part of the sensible (αἰσθητόν), the Stoics on the other hand, claimed that the sign is 'a proposition' (ἀξίωμα), and on this account, something intelligible (νοητόν).[12] Furthermore, Epicureans expected past time-honoured experiences to vouch for any similar experience and thus enable the inference from what is manifest in the present experience to what remains hidden: they appealed to the transposition 'selon la similitude'.[13] As to the Stoics, they resorted to the argument of hypothetical syllogism (τὸ συνημμένον), and required the known (A) to reveal the unknown (B): if A … then B. They say that 'The Sign is an antecedent proposition in a valid hypothetical major premise, which serves to reveal the consequent.'[14] The mode of inference upon which they base their proof is said to be 'par élimination'.[15]

Antecedent A corresponds to the sign which, as the Stoics clarify, is something 'sayable' (λεκτόν). In the semiotic triangle traced by Sextus the 'sayable', λεκτόν, corresponds to the 'signified', σημαινόμενον.[16] In the work of the Stoic allegorists, these 'sayables' are the statements in particular of Homer and Hesiod, whom the uncontested master of Jewish allegory, Philo, knows and quotes.[17] In Philo, however, such statements are to be found in the Bible. If a particular biblical statement (A) has the status of a sign, then through allegorical exegesis, it is possible to infer (B), that which is a hidden truth, ἄδηλον, and pertains to the intelligible.

We understand then that the notion of 'sign' as stated by Philo in the preceding examples of the plain (*Det.* 1) and laughter (*Praem.* 31) follows the Stoic definition of the sign.

2. Before discussing the question of the hermeneutical function of the sign in Philonic exegesis, I will begin with a few preliminary considerations regarding the delimitation of the corpus.

[12] Sextus Empiricus, *Math.* 8.244; see also 8.177 (Greek text and English translation in Sextus Empiricus, *Log.* 2.244 [Bury, LCL]). See Bréhier 1970, 32–3.

[13] Delattre 2005, 15–16; Philodemus, *De signis*, 2.

[14] Sextus Empiricus, *Math.* 8.244 (Greek text and English translation in Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians* 2.244 [Bury, LCL]); cf. *Pyr.* 2.104 (Bury, LCL).

[15] Delattre 2005, 15–16, 17. On the Stoic theory of implication (or inference), see Gourinat 2000, 221–33.

[16] Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos* 8, 11–12 (English translation in Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians* 2.11–12 [Bury, LCL]); commentary in Manetti 1993, 93–4 (and figure 6.1) and Gourinat 2000, 111–15. On the λεκτόν, see Manetti 1993, 94–7; Gourinat 2000, 115–19. Gourinat translates λεκτόν by 'exprimable' (expressible) which is 'la traduction française la plus courante depuis Bréhier' (p. 115). I will retain here the translation of λεκτόν by 'sayable', to underscore the closeness of the λεκτόν with the statement in the Stoic system of meaning.

[17] See Pépin 1976, 234–9.

In the *De vita Mosis* (2.46–47), Philo, for whom the two aspects of divine activity, namely the creation of the world and the origin of the laws, are inextricably linked,[18] organizes the 'Holy Books' – namely the Pentateuch (LXX) – into two groups: the *historica*, which include the account of creation and the life of the patriarchs, and the *nomothetica*, which contain the texts of the law stating what is prescribed and what is forbidden.[19]

As to the occurrences of the word 'sign' considered here, they are limited to those in which σημεῖον appears in an exegetical development of a biblical text.[20] The uses of the term occurring outside an exegetical context will not be taken into account. Furthermore, those occasions where the word 'sign' is mentioned in Philonic exegesis because it is cited in the biblical text itself, will not be included either.[21] Those occurrences will not be considered since, when the word σημεῖον appears in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, Philo's comments are not hermeneutical, but raise other issues, beginning with semantics, with which I am not concerned here.

In most occurrences within the corpus analysed here, with the exception of the more developed passages quoted on the plain as a sign of battle (*Det.* 1 commenting on Gen. 4:8) and laughter as a sign of spiritual joy (*Praem.* 31 commenting on Gen. 21:6), the word 'sign' appears in the expression Σημεῖον δέ. In this concise form, the expression is often translated in the *Œuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie* as 'Et (en) voici la preuve' ('And this is the proof [of it]'). It would be more correct, I think, to translate: 'Et (en) voici le signe' ('And this is the sign [of it]'). Indeed, in this brief formulation, σημεῖον should be understood with the same meaning as in the more developed and explicit formulations such as those of 'the plain' or of 'laughter', since Philo does not reformulate the definition of the word each time he uses σημεῖον.

In his commentaries Philo distinguishes between two levels of meaning, literal (ῥητή) and allegorical (ὑπόνοια, ἀλληγορία). To situate those

[18] See especially *Mos.* 2.48; *Opif.* 2–3.

[19] In *Mos.* 2.45–7, the 'historical' part is divided into two sub-parts: the creation of the world and the biographies. In *Praem.* 1–2, the structure of the Pentateuch is tripartite: the first part pertains to creation, the second is historical, and the third legislative. The designations *historica* and *nomothetica* come from Nikiprowetzky 1996, 131, who takes this terminology from Adrien Turnèbe (1552). On the structure of Philo's Bible, see Wolfson 1947, I: 117–31; and the critical observations of Pépin 1967, 151–3; Nikiprowetzky 1977, 202; 223–4 n. 198; 234–5 n. 217; Hadas-Lebel 2003, 193–5; Kamesar 2009, 74–7.

[20] *Abr.* 33; *Congr.* 92; *Det.* 1, 3, 9; *Fug.* 5, 204; *Gig.* 33; *Migr.* 69; *Mos.* 1.188; *Praem.* 31; *Spec.* 1.90.

[21] On σημεῖον mentioned in the Pentateuch (LXX) and discussed by Philo, see Gen. 1:14 in *Opif.* 55, 58, 59. Gen. 4:15 in *Det.* 177–8, *Fug.* 60; *Praem.* 72; *QG* 1.75. Gen. 9:13 in *QG* 2.64. Exod. 4:8–9 in *Mos.* 1.76–82. Num. 21:8 in *Leg.* 2.79. Deut. 6:8 in *Spec.* 4.137–8.

two types of exegesis in relation to each other, Philo likes to repeat the following analogy: literal exegesis is to allegorical exegesis as the body is to the soul. Thus, at the banquet of the Therapeutae,

> the exposition of the sacred scriptures treats the inner meaning conveyed in allegory. For to these people the whole law book seems to resemble a living creature with the literal ordinances for its body and for its soul the invisible mind laid up in its wording. (Philo, *Contempl.* 78 [Colson, LCL])[22]

Scholars have raised many questions over the relation of allegorical exegesis to literal exegesis. When is literal exegesis sufficient to account fully for the meaning of Scripture? Should it always be supplemented by allegorical exegesis? Or does Philo find it necessary to appeal to allegorical exegesis only when literal exegesis proves insufficient? And in those cases, what are the criteria which necessitate the abandonment of a literal interpretation? Are there clues in the biblical text itself which indicate a transition to allegory? Following Carl Siegfried (1875), several Philo experts have suggested lists of 'indicators of allegory': etymology, aporia, obscurities or contradictions within the biblical text which encourage the abandonment of 'literal ordinances' in favour of examining 'the invisible mind laid up in its wording'.[23]

Let us then examine how Philo proceeds to allegorical exegesis when the literal interpretation fails to render the full sense of Scripture. We begin with the construction of the 'plain' as a sign of the 'battle'. In *Det.* 1–2, the literal interpretation of Gen. 4:8 ('Cain said to Abel his brother, Let us make our way to the plain'), enables Philo to establish a relationship of implication of the type 'if plain (A) … then battle (B)':

> the plain, the rendezvous to which he summons him, is a figure of contest and desperate battle. For we see that most contests both in war and peace take place on plains.

In Stoic terms, we could refer to the 'plain' as the antecedent, and to 'contest' as the consequent. In other words, the sign, identified as the antecedent in this biblical statement, is the word 'plain' which constitutes the sign. Philo then has a logical instrument enabling him to interpret the hidden, non-manifest, meaning of the places in Scripture where the word 'plain' appears.

Thus, when Jacob calls Lea and Rachel 'to the plain, where the flocks were' (Gen. 31:4), Philo identifies in the word 'plain' a 'very great sign'

[22] Compare *Abr.* 147; 200; 236; *Migr.* 93.

[23] *Contempl.* 78. On the 'laws of allegory' (*Somn.* 1.73, 102; *Abr.* 68; *Spec.* 1.287), see Pépin 1967, 133 and 161–7.

(σημεῖον … μέγιστον), and applies the inference previously elaborated. 'The plain' to which Jacob calls Lea and Rachel 'is a sign for contentiousness (φιλονεικίας σημεῖον)'. This battle is of a wholly different nature from the one between Cain and Abel. The battle here concerns the ascetic who is fighting the 'irrational powers in the soul' with 'admonition and correction' (*Det.* 3). We see then that the sign-plain enables Philo to move from the letter of the biblical statement to its figurative interpretation. The relationship of implication is thus revealing of a non-manifest fact (ἄδηλον), the inward battle which rages between the contradictory parts, rational and irrational, of the soul.[24]

We turn to the construction of 'laughter' as a sign of 'spiritual joy' (*Praem.* 31). The biblical text upon which the movement from laughter to spiritual joy is constructed is the story of the birth of Isaac, and more precisely the mention of the laughter of Abraham and Sara at the announcement of the forthcoming birth of their son (Gen. 17:17 and 18:11–12). Philo comments upon this in *Leg.* 3.217–18.

In contradistinction to those who are devoid of wisdom and know the sufferings and troubles of a life governed by the senses (αἴσθησις), Abraham, figure of the wise man, 'begets with joy, not sorrow'. As for Sara, figure of virtue, she gives birth to a child who is 'laughter and joy (γέλως καὶ χαρά), for that is what "Isaac" means' (*Leg.* 3.217–18). The statement 'laughter' is thus the sign of this 'invisible and spiritual reality' which is joy, and which, for Philo, is 'the fairest of possessions' (*Det.* 120).[25]

How does Philo proceed with the statement 'laughter' in the biblical text? Constructed this way, the sign 'laughter' is the basis upon which Philo develops the allegorical level of his exegetical interpretation. Thus, commenting on Gen. 21:6 ('The Lord has made laughter for me'), Philo writes:

> Therefore, O ye initiate, open your ears wide and take in holiest teaching. The 'laughter' is joy, and 'made' is equivalent to 'beget', so that what is said is of this kind, the Lord begat Isaac; for He is Himself Father of the perfect nature (πατήρ ἐστι τῆς τελείας φύσεως), sowing and begetting happiness in men's souls. (*Leg.* 3.219 [Colson and Whitaker, LCL])

From the name of Isaac, which means 'laughter', Philo deduces the portrait of Isaac as the figure of the joy filling the soul which 'rejoices in the Father and Maker of all' (*Praem.* 32), and thus as a model of those who reach spontaneously, 'by nature', the knowledge of God.

[24] Compare *Congr.* 26: Leah corresponds to the rational part of the soul, Rachel to the irrational.

[25] On Isaac and joy, see *Congr.* 36, and the notes of M. Alexandre, *ad loc.* (in *Les Œuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie*, vol. XVI, Paris: Cerf, 1967).

Likewise, after having given the literal interpretation of the narrative of the sacrifice of Isaac (*Abr.* 167–99), Philo observes that the story, far from being confined to 'the literal and obvious explanation', reveals a reality 'recognized by those who prefer the mental to the sensible and have the power to see it'. For, Philo explains, 'the proposed victim is called in Chaldean Isaac, but, if the word is translated into our language, Laughter' (*Abr.* 200–1). This 'laughter', the Alexandrian explains, is not the one which arouses in the body (σώματι), but the one which happens 'in thought' (κατὰ διάνοιαν): the good emotion and joy (εὐπάθεια καὶ χαρά). 'This the Sage is said to sacrifice as his duty to God, thus showing in a figure that rejoicing is most closely associated with God alone' (*Abr.* 201–2).

Thus, 'laughter' is the word-sign of an invisible reality, which only those who are able to 'see' can access through allegorical exegesis: the spiritual joy of which 'laughter' is the sign has its source in God.

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After those few observations on the status of the 'sign' in Philo's commentary of the *historica*, I wish to clarify its function in comparison with two terms which belong to the same conceptual configuration: ἀφορμαί and σύμβολον. There exists an exact synonym of the word σημεῖον in terms of the sense which Philo gives to this term in the expression 'and this is the sign of it' (σημεῖον δέ) to invite the reader to identify in a particular statement a 'starter' of allegorical reading: those are the ἀφορμαί, the 'starting points' of allegory. Thus, unable to give an adequate literal interpretation of the trees in Paradise (Gen. 2:8), 'which do not resemble at all those at home', Philo calls upon men who have the gift of seeing and know how to recognize the clues which 'the sacred oracles most evidently afford us' as starting points (ἀφορμάς) of allegory (*Plant.* 36). And how shall we understand the fact that the lawgiver speaks of 'confusion' (σύγχυσις) of languages, when what Gen. 11:7 speaks of is not 'confusion', i.e. the fusing together of languages in the sense of their destruction, but their separation? Again, it is to allegorical interpretation to which individuals must turn. For through these states of aporia, 'the lawgiver gives openings' (ἀφορμάς) to allegorical interpretation (*Conf.* 191). With the term ἀφορμή, Philo thus refers to that which stimulates allegorical exegesis, something which enables one to 'jump' from the literal understanding of the text to something else, and to 'start up' an allegorical explanation.[26]

[26] On the ἀφορμαί as a springboard of allegory, see Pépin 1967, 161–2.

But it will not have escaped the careful reader that there is another term similar to σημεῖον, which Philo uses much more often than ἀφορμαί: it is the word σύμβολον. In particular, after having defined the 'plain' as a *sign* (σημεῖον) of the battle (*Det.* 1 and 3), Philo concludes, in *Det.* 32: 'I think it has been made sufficiently clear that the plain on to which Cain challenges Abel to come is a figure (σύμβολον) of a contest to be fought out'. Or, while in *Praem.* 31 'laughter' is said to be 'the outward and bodily *sign* (σημεῖον) of the unseen and spiritual joy', in *Mut.* 261, the name which Sara is invited to give to her son Isaac is said to be 'the *symbol* (σύμβολον) of joy, laughter'. Should we conclude that for Philo σημεῖον and σύμβολον refer to two interchangeable notions? Probably not. Indeed, several times Philo declares that, as they are understood through a literal reading, words are the symbols of hidden realities, the function of 'allegory' – etymologically, the action of 'saying something else' – bringing to light those hidden realities.[27] Thus the Therapeutae,

> read the Holy Scriptures and seek wisdom from their ancestral philosophy by taking it as an allegory, since they think that the words of the literal text are *symbols* of something whose hidden nature (σύμβολα … ἀποκεκρυμμένης φύσεως) is revealed by studying the underlying meaning, (*Contempl.* 28 [Colson, LCL])[28]

Likewise, after the literal interpretation of the story of Abraham's hospitality towards the three travellers (Gen. 18), Philo proceeds to an allegorical exposition. For, he says, 'spoken words (ἐν φωναῖς) contain symbols of things apprehended by the understanding only (διανοίᾳ)' (*Abr.* 119). Elsewhere, Philo examines the 'symbol of the hidden thought' (σύμβολον διανοίας ἀφανοῦς) underlying the literal exposition of each of the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (*Praem.* 61).

We have seen that to reveal the hidden reality (ἄδηλον) of which a particular biblical statement is the sign and to move from literal to allegorical exegesis, Philo – like the Stoics – proceeds through inductive reasoning: from the 'plain' he infers the 'battle', just as he deduces 'spiritual joy' from 'laughter'. Between the sign and the reality revealed by the sign, there is a necessary relationship of implication or of inference. By contrast,

[27] See especially Heraklides of Pontus, *Quaest. homericae* 5.2: 'We call allegory a figure which consists in speaking of one thing to refer to another wholly different thing.' On the history and the definition of the word ἀλληγορία, see Pépin 1976, 87–92. Harl (1993, 96) notes that if in Philo the meaning of Scripture is 'hidden', it is not 'obscure'; in this respect he differs from the Greek Fathers and from Origen who will develop the theory of 'biblical obscurity'.

[28] The theme of the 'nature which loves to hide' is borrowed from Heraclitus (fragment 123 Diels–Kranz). On this 'maxim' of Heraclitus, see Hadot 1998, 85–6. On its use in Philo, see Pépin 1967, 138 and note 2. On the notion of symbol in relation to allegorical exegesis, see Pépin 1976, 231–4.

according to its most frequent definition, the symbol is composed of the two halves of an object split into two, whose connection serves as sign of recognition. Thus, in Philo, there is a relationship of complementarity between the words and the hidden realities which they symbolize. To say that the 'plain' is the symbol of 'battle', is to state that where Scripture says 'plain', the allegorist must transpose 'battle'; but it is also to indicate that 'plain' and 'battle' are the two halves of the same reality which the connection between literal and allegorical exegesis brings to light by establishing a parallel between the two elements – one manifest, the other hidden – which constitute it.

The fact remains that the notion of symbol is inadequate to justify a transposition from the 'plain' to the 'battle'. To understand this transposition, we must appeal to the notion of sign. It is indeed the function of the sign, to use Philo's terms, to enable one to draw 'conclusions about things which are obscure from things that are manifest' (*Det.* 1). We see then that in their Philonic manifestations, the notions of sign and symbol are far from being interchangeable: by explaining the hidden reality which corresponds to the manifest reality, the sign enables one to build the symbol.

3. So what happens to the notion of sign in Philo's commentary on the *nomothetica*? While in the commentary on the *historica* Philo favours allegorical explanation over against literal explanation, when he comments on the *nomothetica*, the exegete attributes equal importance to the search for both the literal and the figurative meanings. A typical passage in this respect, which is frequently discussed, is the *De migratione Abrahami*, 89–93.[29] Following a procedure opposed to his usual heuristic approach that favours the search for a figurative meaning, Philo displays his disagreement with some practitioners of allegorical interpretation:

> There are some who, regarding laws in their literal sense in the light of symbols of matters belonging to the intellect (σύμβολα νοητῶν πραγμάτων), are overpunctilious about the latter, while treating the former with easy-going neglect. (*Migr.* 89 [Colson and Whitaker, LCL])

But to emphasize exclusively the symbolic interpretation of the Sabbath risks 'abrogating the laws laid down for its observance, and light fires or till the ground or carry loads or institute proceedings in court … or do all else that we are permitted to do as well on days that are not festival

[29] On the analysis of the *Migr.* 89–93, see especially Wolfson 1947, 1: 66–70; Pépin 1967, 141–2; Nikiprowetzky 1996, 94–6.

seasons' (*Migr.* 91). Such interpretations are detrimental to obeying the commandments and flout any kind of social life, as is the case for those people who act 'as though they had become disembodied souls, and knew neither city nor village nor household nor any company of human beings at all' (*Migr.* 90). On the contrary, for Philo, when it is a matter of halakha, of ritual prescriptions with respect to the Sabbath, festivals, circumcision, or service in the temple, it is appropriate to 'give careful attention to both aims, to a more full and exact investigation of what is not seen and of what is seen to be stewards without reproach' (*Migr.* 89).

Thus, when Philo comments on the ritual prescriptions or on ceremonial laws, he examines in the same detail both exegetical levels, namely the literal and the figurative meaning, without considering the first as inferior to the second. What then is the status of the sign in his commentaries on legislative texts, the *nomothetica*? Although it is not an absolute rule,[30] it is unsurprising that in those commentaries the notion of sign – in the meaning retained here, i.e., as the manifest sign of a hidden reality – disappears almost completely in favour of the notion of symbol. Indeed, in the allegorical commentary of the *nomothetica*, instead of attempting to reveal the hidden realities through the mediation of signs, Philo takes care to highlight them with the help of symbols, taking into account on the one hand the liturgical sequence or the ritual object, and on the other the hidden reality as two halves of the same symbol.

Which hidden realities do the Sabbath, the festivals, the circumcision or the temple service symbolize for Philo? As a reminder of the seventh day of the creation of the world, the Sabbath teaches created beings, who cease their activity on that day, that it is the Uncreated who accomplishes everything (*Migr.* 91; *Her.* 170).[31] As to the festivals, they are 'a symbol of spiritual joy' (*Migr.* 92). Thus, during the festival of the 'First-Fruits', or Pentecost – fifty days after the festival of the Sheaf, which takes place on the second day of the week of Unleavened Bread and marks the beginning of the harvest season – two leavened loaves of wheaten bread are offered as first fruit and testimony of gratitude: the leaven which raises the dough symbolizes at the same time the most perfect food and the joy which elevates the soul (*Spec.* 2.184–5). To the traditional justifications of circumcision (for medical, ritual or moral order), Philo adds two symbolic explanations: circumcision is the symbol of the elimination of superfluous

[30] As Pépin observes, Philo is not an author 'exagérément systématique' (1967, 150). Indeed, this use of σημεῖον is found in the context of an exegesis of Exod. 30:34–5 in *Her.* 198.

[31] On the 'invisible content' of the Sabbath, see also *Leg.* 1.6, 18; *Cher.* 87; *Spec.* 2.56–70. On the Sabbath in Philo, see Hadas-Lebel 2003, 162–9.

pleasures; furthermore, it reminds man that God alone is the Cause of all that comes into being (*Migr.* 92; *Spec.* 1.8–11).[32] As to the service in the temple, among the different categories of public sacrifices which the lawgiver prescribes, the first is the whole burnt-offering whose regulations are instituted in the first chapter of Leviticus. The text gives a clear meaning for the different sequences of the sacrifical rite: species and gender of the victim, laying on of hands, slaying, sprinkling of the blood around the altar, the cutting of the victim into parts which are finally all given over to the fire. To this Philo adds another meaning which 'is indicated in the mystical character which symbols convey' (*Spec.* 1.200).[33] It is the role of allegorical exegesis to bring to light this 'other meaning', by showing, through symbols, other realities of a moral, philosophical or spiritual order.

Philo concludes: the two aspects of the law – namely obedience to the commandments and their symbolic meaning – correspond to the body and to the soul.

> It follows that, exactly as we have to take thought for the body, because it is the abode of the soul, so we must pay heed to the letter of the laws. If we keep and observe these, we shall gain a clearer conception of those things of which these are the symbols. (*Migr.* 93 [Colson and Whitaker, LCL])

In the commentary on the *nomothetica*, Philo expects the symbol to build a connection between the sensible and the intelligible order.

But how should we explain the disappearance of the sign in the commentary of the *nomothetica*? We have seen that in the case of the *historica* the sign was an element of the biblical statement to which it was exegetically linked.[34] On the other hand, in the case of the *nomothetica*, the literal commentary of the exegete often derives as much from the actual practice of the commandments in the Alexandrian Jewish milieu contemporary with Philo, as from the laws as stated by the lawgiver.

Thus, to stay with the single example of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Nicholas de Lange has shown, through analysing the discrepancies which the different ritual sequences of the festival of the 'Crossing Feast' (*Spec.* 2.145–61) present in comparison to the version of the Septuagint (Exod. 12:1–20), that Philo was implementing a

[32] On the Philonic interpretation of circumcision, see Hadas-Lebel 2003, 155–9; Termini 2009, 115–17.

[33] Nikiprowetzky 1996 has highlighted the fact that, in Philo, the spiritual meditation on sacrifices does not imply neglect of the sacrificial practices in the Temple of Jerusalem.

[34] On the sign as a 'sayable', see above, p. 000 and note 16.

'radical reinterpretation' of the biblical narrative.[35] The festival which Philo describes is 'the Alexandrian *pascha* with which he was personally familiar'.[36] In his commentary on the *nomothetica*, Philo often digresses from the strict literary statements of the Pentateuch (LXX), to accentuate 'how' the rites, namely the oral law, are accomplished in an Alexandrian context, and then takes care to extract the symbolic meaning from it.[37] We understand therefore that this detachment from the biblical statement is incompatible with an exegesis that expects the signs to reveal 'the hidden truth which can be traced under the surface meaning of the words' (διὰ τῶν ἐμφανῶν ὀνομάτων) (*Conf.* 143), namely in the words of the text themselves.

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What, then, is the hermeneutical function of the sign in Philo's biblical commentary? As it is defined and put into practice in those commentaries, the notion of sign follows the Stoic theory of the sign. When the Stoics define the sign as a 'sayable' (λεκτόν), the sign for Philo is an element of the biblical statement that he expects will allow him to delve into the hidden meaning of Scripture. On the other hand, when the exegete moves away from the biblical statement – as is the case in his commentary on the ceremonial and ritual laws, the *nomothetica* – the sign disappears from his hermeneutical approach.

In the commentary of the *historica*, the sign is a complex notion, which relates at the same time to the 'springboard' of allegory (ἀφορμή) and to the σύμβολον. In its capacity as ἀφορμή, as a springboard or impetus towards figurative interpretation, the sign functions as a link connecting literal and allegorical exegesis. In that it is related to the symbol, the sign reveals the hidden reality and connects the visible with the invisible, the expressible with the inexpressible.[38]

[35] De Lange 2009b, 157–66. On the 'Crossing Feast', apart from *Spec.* 2.145–61, see *Mos.* 2.222–32, *QE* 1.1–19, *Leg.* 3.94, 165, *Congr.* 161–2, *Migr.* 25, *Sacr.* 63, *Her.* 192–3, *Decal.* 159–60.

[36] De Lange 2009b, 165.

[37] On the question of Philonic halakha, see the discussion in Daniel 1967, 221–3, and his conclusions (238–40), which relate only to the first book of the *Specialibus legibus*. See also Winston 2009, 247–51.

[38] On the concept of the sign in Philo, see Lévy 2011, 149–61, which I could not take account of before completion of this chapter.

CHAPTER 13

Jewish archaeology and art in antiquity

David Noy

What makes an archaeological find 'Jewish'? At what point does an ancient work of art become classified as Jewish rather than Roman, Hellenistic or Byzantine? The convention is to put the burden of proof on the Jewishness: a site or object needs some identifiable feature to qualify for a 'Jewish' label. This chapter will look at some archaeological sites in the Graeco-Roman diaspora from the second century BCE to the fifth century CE (Delos, Ostia, Apamea, Mopsuestia; see Figure 13.1 for plans of the four buildings) where the identification is problematic, or where it can only be made because of a specific development in the site's history.

Levine (2006, 520) offers what he describes as a compromise definition: 'Jewish art and architecture are intended for use in a distinctly Jewish setting, either a public building or some other context that serves the wider Jewish community.' This is perfectly reasonable, but does not solve the problem of how to identify Jewishness in the archaeological record, especially in the diaspora where Jews did not have the exclusive services of builders or artists.[1] The most distinctively Jewish practices such as circumcision and paying the temple tax left no archaeological trace. Schwartz (2001, 247) writes: 'Every synagogue so far discovered is decorated, either on its façade or within, with iconographic indications of sanctity.' But of course that is precisely why a building would be identified as a synagogue.

The difficulty of finding a boundary between Jews, Christians and pagans in the material remains has been widely recognized. Nielsen (2005, 65) describes the synagogue as primarily a room for assembly, prayer, service and banquets. How would this affect the archaeology? A room for assembly would leave evidence from its non-domestic size, but there were many other groups in Graeco-Roman cities who also met together. Prayer

[1] It will not be possible to consider here the question of whether synagogues in the diaspora and Palestine were fundamentally similar (Levine 2000, 125) or different (Nielsen 2005, 104).

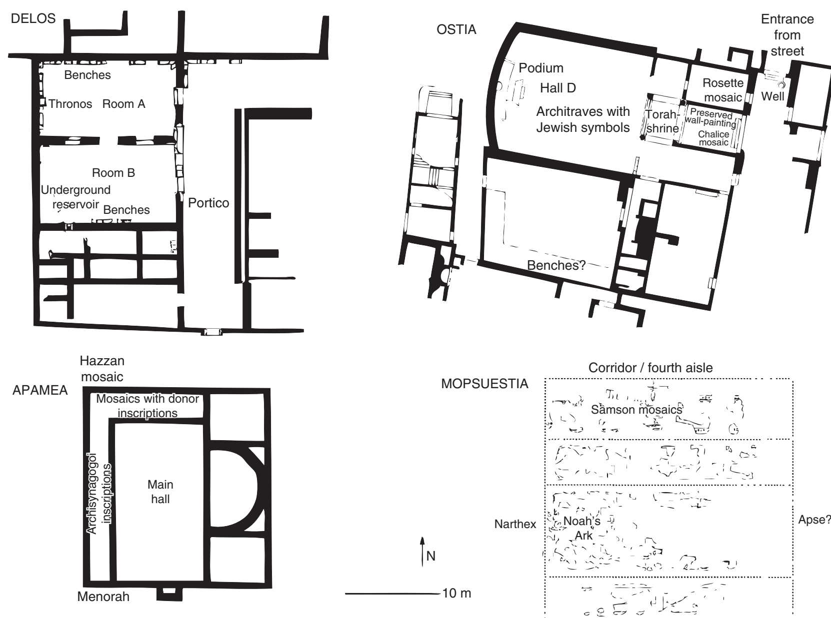

Figure 13.1 Outlines of the four buildings, adjusted to approximately the same scale and orientation. They are based on Trümper 2004, Figure 2 (Delos, final phase); Runesson 2001, Figure 88 (Ostia, final phase); Brenk 1991, Abb.2 (Apamea); Kitzinger 1973, Figure A (Mopsuestia, with possible wall lines added).

and services might involve particular fixtures or the orientation of the building, and banquets might involve benches, but none of this would necessarily be the case, and benches and Torah-shrines could be portable. A ritual bath (mikveh) is a good diagnostic feature, and archaeologists have made determined efforts to identify one in some synagogues, but many diaspora synagogues (including Delos and Ostia) were near the sea and had no need of their own bath (Nielsen 2005, 85).

A further factor to be considered is that diaspora Judaism in the period under consideration was far from monolithic. The possibility of using Jewish archaeology and art to identify a specifically Hellenistic Judaism which had little in common with rabbinic texts was pioneered by Goodenough. While the salvation-based mystical religion that he identified has not been widely accepted,[2] the belief that archaeology provides valid source material which deserves interpretation is now almost

[2] Discussed by Fine 2005, 38.

universally accepted, which was not the case before his work was published in the 1950s. He also showed clearly that the aniconic art which might be expected from biblical and rabbinic literature was far from the norm. Levine (2006, 550) notes that, after the aniconic Hasmonean period, there was a return to figurative Jewish art from the late second century CE, at least partly attributable to greater openness to Graeco-Roman culture. Magness (2005) argues for a link between synagogue mosaics with zodiacs and the priestly class (as opposed to rabbis). The logical extension of this approach is to *expect* that archaeology from different sites, or even the same site at different periods, will have different features according to the dominant interests within the local Jewish community of the time (which are almost certain to be unidentifiable to us), as well as general trends within Judaism.

Recent writers (e.g., Fine 2005, 125) have stressed the need to see diaspora archaeology in the context of its location. The influences on diaspora synagogues were as likely to come from local art and architecture, such as the buildings of voluntary associations stressed by Richardson (2004, 337), as from Palestinian styles.[3] Some synagogues, most clearly those at Dura-Europos and Stobi, were adapted from use as private houses.[4] Local politics, topography and economics would all affect what was possible at any site. Hachlili (1998) attempts to find the common features of Jewish art and archaeology in the diaspora, and is able to make a convincing case: each feature which she identifies is backed up by numerous examples. However, if she had set out to do precisely the opposite and find features which individual Jewish archaeological sites had in common with their non-Jewish neighbours, she could have produced an equally impressive array of examples.

Diachronic changes must also be considered. Binder (1999, 4) notes an unfortunate tendency to combine archaeological evidence from different periods in a way which is particularly likely to distort the picture of pre-70 CE Judaism by expecting it to be similar to late antiquity. The further back in time one goes, the harder it is to identify a synagogue archaeologically, since the use of distinctively Jewish symbols and the installation of a fixed Torah-shrine (two of the most straightforward diagnostic features) are relatively late developments. Recent studies have argued that the endowing of art with symbolic meaning, and the use of specific religious

[3] Nielsen 2005, 92–3, expresses similar views.

[4] White 1990 argues that conversion from private houses was the norm among diaspora synagogues. His interpretation of particular sites has been widely contested, but the debate continues.

symbols, began with Christianity but was soon followed by Judaism.[5] Runesson (2001, 96) points to similarities between synagogues increasing over time: community centres with rooms for various purposes; water facilities; mosaic floors with geometric patterns or Jewish symbols (which would also be found elsewhere in the building); benches in at least one room; an apse or niche and platform (*bimah*). He is certainly right that such features become more common in late antiquity. None of them is identifiable in the Delos building (see below). The danger remains that the arguments become circular: these features are *expected* in a synagogue, therefore a building which does not have them is not a synagogue. Kraemer makes a similar point about burials, in the context of rooms with apparently 'pagan' decoration in the Vigna Randanini catacomb at Rome: 'How one interprets the rooms depends on one's *a priori* assumptions about what Jews did and did not do; yet once the rooms are identified as Jewish, our evidence for the behavior of Jews may be significantly revised' (Kraemer 1991, 154).

Elsner (2003) is undoubtedly right to point out that 'Jewish art' is a modern classification implying an exclusivity which did not exist in the real world. However, in some cases a site in the diaspora *must* be either Jewish or non-Jewish, but we are now unable to determine which, as will be seen in two of the four case-studies below. This difficulty can be attributed to a number of factors. Artisans did not work exclusively for Jewish customers (Elsner 2003, 118–19). Sculptors and mosaicists who were employed in building or refurbishing synagogues worked for Christians and/or pagans too, and were not likely to change their artistic style completely (Hachlili 1998, 235). What is preserved is only a fraction (usually a very small one) of what originally existed: the preservation of the walls of the Dura-Europos synagogue gives a completely different impression of the building from the one we would have if only the ceiling tiles and floor had survived. We usually have little idea of how a synagogue would have appeared from the outside. For example, there is debate about the approach to the Delos building: was it through a monumental portico open to the public, or a small entrance in a side street (or through both, at different periods)? If a clear indication of Jewishness was (or was not) made on the outside, did that affect what was visible on the inside?

The two features which have been accepted most readily as identifying material remains as Jewish are the presence of an identifiably Jewish inscription *in situ* and the use of distinctive Jewish iconography. The

[5] Nielsen 2005, 67; Levine 2006, 550–1.

former raises the question of how an inscription can be determined to be Jewish and *in situ*, which will be relevant to the discussions of Delos and Ostia. The latter depends primarily on the use of the menorah, widely considered the archetypal Jewish symbol from the third century CE and found on everything from oil lamps and bread stamps to architectural features and mosaics. Magness (2005, 19 n. 98) writes: 'The menorah became the preferred Jewish symbol because it evoked the Temple cult, the focus of Jewish salvation, as opposed to the Christian cross, which symbolized Jesus' sacrifice.' Even that is not without ambiguity, however: the menorah has occasionally been found inscribed or painted in apparently Christian burial contexts,[6] and lamps with the menorah do not seem to have been used exclusively by Jews any more than those with Christian symbols were used exclusively by Christians (Elsner 2003, 15). While the presence of a menorah can normally be taken as a good indication of the Jewishness of a maker or patron (if not of the final user), the absence of a menorah does not necessarily mean a lack of Jewishness.

Delos

The building on Delos usually referred to as GD 80 has been widely (although not universally) acclaimed as the earliest known synagogue building since its identification as such by the first excavator, André Plassart, in 1913, and further work on the site by Philippe Bruneau in 1962.[7] Its first phase is dated to the second century BCE, although it went through a number of renovations until it fell out of use completely probably at the end of the second century CE (Trümper 2004, 569). A full discussion of all interpretations will not be given here as they have been thoroughly reviewed by Trümper (2004) and Matassa (2007).

The discovery on the island of two Samaritan dedicatory inscriptions (*IJudO* I Ach66–7) created a further complication, as it made clear for the first time that Samaritans as well as Jews were established there. The possibility of the building being a Samaritan synagogue was raised by Kraabel (1984, 333). It is more likely that the unexcavated building near which the inscriptions were found, 92.5 m north of GD80, was the Samaritan establishment, but there is no way in which a Jewish synagogue of this period could be distinguished from a Samaritan one through archaeological

[6] Kraemer 1991, 151.

[7] E.g. Lahr 2000, 145; Nielsen 2005, 84. The basis of the identification is not usually discussed in such surveys.

evidence other than inscriptions. Levine's suggestion (2000, 103) that both groups may have shared one building seems very unlikely in view of everything which is known about their relationship.

The two recent detailed studies of GD80 have come to very different conclusions. Trümper (2004, 581) regards it as probably but not certainly a synagogue: 'Therefore, it seems most likely that the building was planned and realized by a group that gathered neither because of common commercial interests nor in order to venerate pagan gods in temples or chapels and with sacrifices – and this very well could have been a Jewish or Samaritan group.' Matassa (2007, 111) views it as almost certainly not a synagogue: 'It is safe to say that while there is nothing that would exclude GD80 from being a synagogue, there is not one piece of evidence that would suggest that it actually was a synagogue.'

The main issues will be discussed briefly here in order to illustrate the methodological problems of identifying early synagogues. Jewish communities in places like Delos[8] must have met somewhere, but how likely is it that they left any clear archaeological evidence in the period before recognizable features such as the menorah came into use? White (1990, 64–7) suggests that the building was originally a domestic residence, but this has been refuted (Binder 1999, 307–8). However, the question remains of whether it was purpose-built or converted from another use in one of the renovations, probably after 88 BCE; there are close similarities to association buildings on Delos, particularly the House of the Poseidoniasts and Sarapeion A.[9] It would not be surprising if the building on Delos which was used by Jews (wherever it was) looked very similar to those used by pagan associations, since the basic requirement would have been the same: providing a meeting-place for a group without official status whose membership was probably counted in tens rather than hundreds. Whoever designed such a building would naturally have used local forms of architecture adapted to Jewish needs (Trümper 2004, 584), and local builders would have erected it.

Plassart's identification of GD80 as a synagogue was based on the discovery of a number of marble dedications to *Theos Hypsistos* or just *Hypsistos* (*IJudO* I, Ach 60–3). This raises two separate problems: whether *Theos Hypsistos* should be identified with the Jewish God,[10] and (as Matassa

[8] Evidence for Jews on Delos: 1 Macc. 15.23; Josephus, *Ant.* 14.213–16, 231–2. See Panayotov in this volume.

[9] Binder 1999, 297–317; Richardson 2004, 194, 216.

[10] As discussed by Mitchell 1999, 98. Two epitaphs from Rheneia, the burial island of Delos, invoke *Theos Hypsistos* in terms which strongly suggest that the Jewish God is meant (*IJudO* I, Ach70–1).

2007, 104–5 has now pointed out[11]) whether the dedications belonged in the building at all or had only been brought there for consumption in the lime-kiln which was established in Room A after the building was abandoned. Two of the inscriptions are on marble bases with small holes in their upper surfaces containing traces of lead; they appear to have supported some sort of figure, a fact which has been used to cast further doubt on their Jewishness (Matassa 2007, 88), but might be explained by their supporting basins or tables, or being used as incense-burners (Trümper 2004, 585).

Various other factors have been adduced in support of GD80 being a synagogue, of which the following are the most significant.[12] A marble base found in the adjacent insula GD79 has a dedication by Agathocles and Lysimachus[13] *epi proseuchē*. Since *proseuchē* was a standard term for synagogue in the diaspora, it has been suggested that this means 'in the synagogue'.[14] Rooms A and B (the divisions of the original assembly hall) both have marble benches along some of their walls, and Room A has a carved marble *thronos* at the centre of its western wall, features which are found in other synagogues although in this case they were probably moved from the theatre and gymnasium.[15] The location of GD80 shows some similarities to the synagogue at Ostia, being near the seashore in a mainly residential, non-commercial district (Trümper 2004, 581–3).

What would constitute proof that a building from the second or first century BCE was a synagogue? Distinctive symbols such as a menorah and distinctive architectural features such as a Torah-shrine would not be expected at that date. A large number of lamps were found in GD80 with images which would normally be labelled 'pagan',[16] but what would a 'Jewish' lamp look like in this period? A mikveh would be a good diagnostic feature, but a number of fairly well-preserved later synagogues including Ostia and Apamea do not seem to have one, so there is no reason to assume that one was essential to every synagogue, and at Delos the sea was available for ritual cleansing. Unless some feature otherwise unparalleled

[11] Trümper 2004, 570, had already raised the possibility that they were brought from another building by Jews.

[12] Trümper and Matassa dismiss some other alleged evidence, including the possibility that the underground reservoir was a mikveh.

[13] This name also occurs in *IJudO* I, Ach63.

[14] Binder 1999, 305. However, the absence of a definite article makes this unlikely (Matassa 2007, 88) and it is more likely to mean 'in (fulfilment of) a prayer/vow', a phrase nevertheless suggestive of Jewish influence. It is also used in the Samaritan inscription *IJudO* I, Ach66.

[15] Binder 1999, 306; Trümper 2004, n. 59; Matassa 2007, 97.

[16] Levine 2000, 103 takes this as the main argument against the building being a synagogue.

in the period was recognized (and that in itself would cast doubt on the dating), it seems that only an inscription found *in situ* and making the building's function clear would be considered sufficient. While a number of such inscriptions exist in Egypt,[17] none of them has an archaeological context which would provide clear evidence of what else to look for.

Ostia

There has never been any doubt about the identification of the synagogue at Ostia, since the crucial evidence was found at a very early stage of the excavation: two architraves with corbels on which large menorahs are carved in low relief, each surrounded by lulav, ethrog and shofar. This was subsequently confirmed by a reused dedicatory inscription (*JIWE* I, 13). Abandonment took place in the fifth (Runesson 2001, 83), or more probably sixth century CE (White 2010, 1012), since recent discoveries have suggested that the last renovation project is late fifth century.[18] Since the Ostia synagogue did not occupy a city-centre site required for Christian use,[19] it was allowed to decline or be abandoned without demolition or reuse, thus preserving the features which are crucial to its identification.

The point at which the building started to be used as a synagogue has been hotly debated between Runesson and White. No Jewish symbols survive from its pre-fourth-century phases. There were wall-paintings showing flowers and vases, but only the base of one partition wall from the second building phase provides evidence of this (Runesson 2001, fig. 93), and there is no way of knowing to what extent other walls were painted, or with what designs. White (1997, 35) proposes that there was originally an insula complex with domestic quarters, shops and perhaps a collegial hall.[20] All the characteristic features of Ostian collegial halls are found in the synagogue, if in a modified way: facilities for meetings and banquets; water supply; monumental layout.[21] The latest research suggests that the synagogue building itself was first erected in 170–90 CE, with major renovation in *c.* 210–25 CE (White 2010, 1012).

[17] *JIGRE* 9, 13, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 117, 126. Some of these are roughly contemporary with the first phase of building GD80 on Delos.

[18] Douglas Boin, '2009 Excavation Season Completed' (online: http://ostiasynagogue.wordpress.com/2009/08/22/season_2009/, dated 22 August 2009, accessed 9 July 2013). I am grateful to Michael White for correspondence on the current archaeological investigation of the building.

[19] Unlike the synagogues at Apamea (see below) and Stobi (*IJudO* I, 61–2).

[20] Lahr 2000, 139–41, 157, also suggests that the building was originally used by a *collegium*.

[21] Runesson 2001, 90. Richardson 2004, 214, notes the similarity to the *collegium* of the *fabri tignuarii* (builders), the Caseggiato dei Triclini.

What impression would the Ostia synagogue have made if it had come to an end in the second or third century before the distinctively Jewish features were installed? The debate between White and Runesson in itself shows the lack of clear evidence for the building's use. Runesson (2001, fig. 103) shows a large hall D on an east–west orientation with a monumental entrance and a smaller triclinium-style room G (modified later), both with benches around three walls.[22] As with Delos, these are features consistent with the building being a synagogue but not ones which would in themselves constitute evidence that it was one. The ground-plan of the building remained basically the same through its later phases. The slightly curved western wall of hall D is unusual, but this is not a known feature of synagogues, and has some parallels elsewhere in Ostia (Runesson 2001, 90). The podium in the centre of this wall was retained in the later phases and has usually been interpreted as the *bimah* from which the Torah was read; it is in the position where a statue would be found in a pagan sanctuary.[23]

The most distinctive archaeological feature is the fourth- or fifth-century Torah-shrine, which would no doubt have been removed (perhaps without leaving any trace) if the building had been turned into a church.[24] The shrine blocked one of the entrances to the hall, and (assuming that the congregation faced it) caused services to be orientated towards the east. This is where the architraves with Jewish symbols were positioned. The dedicatory inscription was found reused face-down in the floor, and the fact that it was reused in such a way might have *dis*couraged the identification of the building as Jewish; pagan epitaphs were also used to repair the floor. The inscription provides an important reminder that significant features may leave no archaeological evidence. It refers to the dedication of 'the ark for the holy law' by a donor whose name was removed and replaced by the name Mindius Faustus. This suggests two separate dedications of arks, neither of which can have been the surviving Torah-shrine since the inscription was regarded as obsolete by the time that was installed. They must, therefore, either have been portable (like the wooden arks known from art[25]) or fixtures which were completely removed in later building phases.[26]

[22] The existence of benches is now rejected by White 2010, 1012.
[23] Hachlili 1998, 75, prefers the idea of a seat for notables.
[24] Several lamps with Jewish symbols were found in an earthen floor, but they too would have been cleared away if the building had been reused.
[25] Runesson et al. 2008, 223, suggest a wooden pedestal.
[26] Michael White (personal communication) now believes that the original ark *has* left archaeological evidence.

Runesson (2001, 94) notes that for the second (according to his interpretation) renovation

> the building technique and decorations follow the general development and modern taste at Ostia; the blocking of doors facing the street, apsidal constructions, black and white mosaics, *opus sectile* floors and walls with strong colours, the style of the well head, etc. Even the design of the *menoroth* on the architraves reveals influence from Roman life, the decoration on them imitating jewels.

They may in fact have been gilded (Hachlili 1998, 79). The floor contained 'a mosaic with the common Jewish rosette inscribed in a hexagon motif' (Runesson 2001, 84); a mosaic which may depict a chalice and loaf; and no depictions of living creatures. None of these would have been considered decisive for identification in themselves, however; neither would the water facilities (a well, not a mikveh), rooms with different functions, benches, or location near the shore. Hachlili (1998, 216) writes that 'clearly, the synagogue of Ostia adhered to the rule of aniconic decoration', but in fact even that is not certain; if only the floors and bases of the walls had survived at Dura-Europos, then it too would have been assumed to follow the aniconic rule.

The synagogue in its final phase[27] took on the distinctive form which can now be seen at the site. It provides most of the features which would be expected in a diaspora synagogue: Jewish symbols, monumental Torah-shrine, orientation towards the east, a dedicatory inscription. At least the first three of these would not have been present in the second to third centuries.

Apamea

Excavations in the 1930s in an area near the main street at Apamea in Syria revealed a polychrome mosaic floor covering about 120 m^2 and containing donor inscriptions[28] whose content made clear through their references to Jewish officials such as *archisynagogoi* and a *hazzan* that the building was a synagogue. This floor is exceptional in Jewish archaeology in its completeness, unity and datability: the date of 392 which is found in two inscriptions (*IJudO* III, Syr53, 58) seems to apply to the whole floor: one date corresponds to January and one to March 392, and the two are

[27] Earthquake damage may have led to the renovation (White 2010, 1011).

[28] *IJudO* III, Syr53–71; the mosaics went beyond the walls shown in Brenk's plan (Figure 13.1). Fourth-century mosaic dedication inscriptions were also found in the Sardis synagogue: *IJudO* II, 60–71.

a considerable distance from each other, suggesting that the work was accomplished rapidly.

Most of the mosaic inscriptions are integrated into the geometric patterns of the floor by putting them at the edges or centres of sections. One group forms a series of parallel frames of identical size, so that the inscriptions become the pattern themselves, and only one interrupts the pattern as if it was added to the design later.[29] The layout suggests that people went through a doorway in which the mosaic of Nehemiah the *hazzan* was situated, but that is not certain, and it is not clear how they reached this point from outside. The approach must have been from a side street, something which was altered when the site came into Christian possession and was gradually incorporated into a larger church with more prominent access.

Apart from one small menorah in the decoration around inscription Syr60, the mosaic consists only of geometric patterns in the 'rainbow' style which was popular locally, using a full range of colours.[30] Two small palms in the last line of Syr70 could be lulavs but are much more likely to be simply space-fillers around a short line of text. There are numerous elaborate mosaics from Apamea and Antioch in the late fourth century depicting scenes from mythology and hunting but nothing of that sort was found in the synagogue. This cannot be explained by general Jewish aversion to depictions, since the 'aniconic rule' was certainly not being observed at Hammath Tiberias around this time, where the mosaic floor depicts Helios and the zodiac cycle as well as a Torah-shrine with flanking menoroth and other symbols.[31] Magness (2005, 15) sees a general trend to 'a monumental architectural style and distinctive types of decoration during … the fourth century, especially its latter part', which she relates to 'contemporary developments in Christianity', that is Christian appropriation of Jewish heritage. The Apamea mosaic does not seem to have been a low-budget one in terms of the range of colours used or the quality of the geometric designs, suggesting a deliberate decision to avoid the representational scenes popular in Apamea and the overtly symbolic designs found in synagogues elsewhere. We can only speculate about what local circumstances led to this.

Nothing is known of what existed on the site before the floor was laid, since no excavation report on earlier phases of the building has

[29] *IJudO* III, Syr61–7, 56. [30] Hachlili 1998, 447.

[31] Magness 2005, 8, 13, dates Hammath Tiberias to the late fourth century; Levine 2006, 542–3, puts it in the mid-fourth century and notes that its quality approaches that of contemporary Antioch.

been published and the records kept in Brussels were destroyed during the Second World War. Apamea must have had at least one synagogue before 392, and it seems unlikely that Jews would have been able to take over a prominent city-centre site for the first time at that date, so continuing Jewish use is probable. The circumstances which led to the new floor are unknown, but probably related to the anti-pagan activities of Bishop Marcellus of Apamea, who was killed in *c*. 389 while overseeing the destruction of a temple at Aulon (Trombley 1993, 123–8). It is possible that the renovations were a statement of new-found Jewish confidence after Marcellus' death, or a necessary repair after damage caused by his followers.

The conversion of the site to Christian use seems to have taken place *c*. 415–20. This was a time of synagogue destruction and forced conversion throughout the empire. The brevity of the mosaic floor's use led to its preservation in very good condition beneath the church; despite the lack of Jewish symbolism, the builders did not wish to reuse it. The synagogue at Apamea was in its final phase when the one at Ostia was probably still being altered. At Apamea it was destruction and rebuilding which preserved enough evidence to identify the synagogue; at Ostia it was abandonment and lack of reuse. If the Ostia synagogue had been built over as the Apamea one was, it is unlikely that it would have been identified as a synagogue. If the Apamea synagogue had simply been abandoned as the Ostia one apparently was, the mosaic inscriptions would have identified it if they had survived, but we have no idea if the building had other recognizably Jewish features above ground level.

Mopsuestia

The case which best illustrates the interpretative difficulties for late antiquity is the building at Mopsuestia in Cilicia which has been identified with equal conviction as a church and a synagogue. The problem lies not in a lack of evidence but in the lack of overlap between what has survived at Mopsuestia and anything clearly identifiable as Jewish or non-Jewish elsewhere.

The building was excavated in 1955, and was identified as a church by the excavator, Budde (1969). It seems to have been paved throughout in polychrome mosaics, many of which have geometrical and floral patterns; some were the object of repairs in antiquity. One large panel in the western part of the nave survived almost intact, showing Noah's Ark in the centre depicted as a wooden chest on four legs, surrounded by a wide

variety of animals (shown individually, not in pairs). This was laid out to be seen by someone entering from the west. The geometric mosaic carpets around it include chandeliers or candlesticks which Hachlili (1998, 211) identifies as ritual objects (rather than just decoration). There are also birds in cages, baskets, amphorae, plants and pomegranates. Part of a fish in another section could be from a scene of the story of Jonah or a zodiac (Avi-Yonah 1981, 187). In the northern outer aisle there are numerous small fragments of the story of Samson from Judges 14–16, each scene with a Greek text (closely corresponding to the LXX). Samson may have been chosen because of supposed similarities to Mopsus, the mythical founder of Mopsuestia (Avi-Yonah 1981, 190).

According to Hill (1996, 235–6) the whole building measured 37 x 25 m and was destroyed by an earthquake. The nave and three aisles measured 25 x 25 m, with a narthex to the west, a possible apse to the east (Hachlili 1998, 74), and a corridor or fourth aisle to the north. He notes that Budde did not excavate the east end fully, and did not publish an adequate plan.

The proposed date for the mosaics ranges from the late fourth to the sixth century, but the second half of the fifth century has most support.[32] Similarities with the mosaics and layout of the synagogue at Hammath Tiberias have been noted (Kitzinger 1973, 136–7). Avi-Yonah believes this date makes Jewishness more likely, since there was legislation in 427 to prohibit the depiction of the cross on floors (*Cod. Justin*. 1.8.1) which was subsequently applied to Christian biblical figures, but this rather overlooks other legislation against the refurbishment of synagogues,[33] which clearly *was* ignored at, for example, Sardis. The Samson cycle was also depicted in the Via Latina catacomb at Rome, but stylistically the Mopsuestia version is very different, using Byzantine dress and depicting Samson as a giant (Avi-Yonah 1981, 188).

Interpretations of the building in recent studies have varied considerably. Hill (1996, 235–6) writes: 'In the present state of knowledge it is safest to assume that this building was indeed a church.' Kitzinger (1973, 138) and Ameling (*IJudO* II, 496) remain neutral about whether the building is a church or synagogue, while Avi-Yonah (1981, 189–90) and Hachlili (1998, 216) support the synagogue identification while acknowledging the uncertainty. Wortzman (2008, 2) apparently takes it for granted that the building is a synagogue when comparing the portrayal of Delilah in a long robe with less fully clothed figures in other synagogue mosaics.

[32] Kitzinger 1973, 138; Avi-Yonah 1981, 189; Hill 1996, 236; Hachlili 1998, 213.
[33] *Cod. Theod.*16.8.25.2, dated to 423.

A variety of arguments have been used to support the identification as a synagogue. The dimensions and layout of the building are more normal for a synagogue than a church.[34] Biblical depictions are much more common in synagogue floors than churches (Hachlili 1998, 215). The way in which the Noah's Ark design is used is suggestive of Jewish narrative rather than Christian symbolism (Hachlili 1998, 216, 254). Clearly none of this is at all conclusive, and much of it is fairly subjective, since Budde used apparent similarities with mosaics from Antioch to argue that the building was a church. A bronze cross found on the mosaic floor does not prove that the original building was Christian. The lack of *comparanda* and the absence of donor inscriptions are the main problems. It can at least be concluded that a clear statement of communal identity (in the sense of not being the other group) was not considered necessary in the mosaic floor, although it may have been made in the walls, ceiling or portable furniture.

Conclusion

Jewish art and architecture developed some distinctive forms in late antiquity, and the depiction of a menorah or the installation of a permanent Torah-shrine provide evidence which is readily identifiable archaeologically. The problems of interpretation arise when dealing with evidence from before the period when the distinctiveness started to develop (approximately from the third century CE), or evidence which does not go beyond the repertoire common to Jews and non-Jews. Magness (2005, 14) writes: 'Many of the biblical scenes represented in synagogue mosaics were also used in contemporary Christian art (such as the binding of Isaac, Daniel in the Lion's Den, Noah's Ark, and the visitation of Abraham by the three angels announcing Isaac's birth).' Similarly, geometric mosaics and wall-paintings were used by Jews and pagans.

It is generally agreed that Jewish and Christian art and architecture developed in tandem with each other, whichever group provided the first impetus.[35] Jewish art was not necessarily aniconic. Rabbinic rulings were issued presumably because of a desire among Jews to use the images available to others: 'a pavement sculptured with imagery you may set on the spot of your sanctuary, but not to worship it.'[36] Imagery used purely for decoration was acceptable, and in some cases Jewish interpretations

[34] Kitzinger 1973, 136; Hachlili 1998, 215. However, Hill 1996, 235–6, thinks that the layout would not be unusual for a Cilician church.

[35] Schwartz 2001, 179.

[36] Targum of Palestine on Lev. 26:1, tr. J.W. Etheridge; discussed by Magness 2005, 51.

were imposed on it.[37] But the underlying impulse came from the fact that the Jews of the diaspora were not an isolated group but used the same architects, builders and mosaicists as the other Greeks and Romans around them.

Of the four buildings discussed in detail, three have been noted as having similarities to comparable contemporary buildings: association halls on Delos and at Ostia, churches at Mopsuestia. The layout of the Apamea synagogue too would not in itself show that the building was a synagogue, and the church which replaced it used the same ground plan. The Jewishness of the buildings at Ostia and Apamea is clear from inscriptions and Jewish symbols. The Jewishness of the buildings on Delos and at Mopsuestia has been debated because of the lack of distinctive inscriptions or symbols. This illustrates the somewhat haphazard nature of such identifications: if different parts of the buildings had survived at Ostia and Apamea, or if the buildings had gone out of use earlier than they did, their Jewishness would not be so apparent. There may well have been other features of the Delos and Mopsuestia buildings which would make their Jewishness or lack of it clear, but they have not survived.

Within the Jewish–Greek tradition, archaeology and art represent in a material form the influences which ran between diaspora Jews and their Greek and Roman neighbours. Their synagogues were not physically or culturally isolated buildings but part of the Graeco-Roman urban landscape. Because the Jews in classical and late antiquity were not a separate or homogenized group, tracing them through archaeology can never be an exact science. Instead, the shared patterns of architecture and decoration, produced in many cases by the same artisans and workshops, provide room for doubt about what is or is not a synagogue, doubt which only exists as a result of a material culture which was not fundamentally different for pagans, Christians and Jews.

[37] Magness 2005 suggests a Jewish interpretation of the Helios/Zodiac mosaics found in a number of synagogues.

CHAPTER 14

Jewish–Greek epigraphy in antiquity

Pieter van der Horst

Introduction

One of the most significant insights the study of ancient Jewish inscriptions has yielded is linguistic: most of them are in Greek.[1] That is the case not only in the diaspora but also in the Land of Israel. However problematic from a methodological point of view the matter of the representativeness of inscriptions may be as evidence for the use of Greek as a spoken language of the Jews, the fact that the majority of early Jewish inscriptions are in Greek justifies an inclusion of a discussion of this material in this volume.

The evidence

The collection and study of Jewish inscriptions from antiquity began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century,[2] but it was not before the 1930s that a systematic attempt was undertaken to make a comprehensive collection of all the evidence available. It was the Catholic scholar Jean-Baptiste Frey who took this giant task upon his shoulders. The result of his efforts appeared in two volumes as *Corpus inscriptionum judaicarum: Recueil des inscriptions juives qui vont du IIIe siècle avant Jésus-Christ au VIIe siècle de notre ère*.[3] The first volume was republished in 1975 by the

One of my most cherished memories of the honorand of this Festschrift, Nicholas de Lange, is what happened during a weekend Nicholas spent at my home in the late 1980s. He had been sleeping in my study, and when I knocked on his door in the morning to tell him breakfast was ready, I found him lying on the floor and leaning on his elbows with two books open in front of him: Jellinek's *Beth ha-Midrash* and Liddell and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon.* Enthusiastically, Nicholas told me he had found a new Greek loanword in a Hebrew midrash early in the morning.

[1] See van der Horst 1991, 22–4.

[2] A good example is Oehler 1909, 292–302, 443–52, 525–38. See also Klein 1920 (mainly Hebrew evidence).

[3] Frey 1936–52. The first volume covers Europe, the second one Asia (including Israel) and Africa. The work is commonly referred to as *CIJ*.

Israeli scholar Baruch Lifshitz who also provided an eighty-five-page *Prolegomenon* containing extensive additions and corrections to Frey's *CIJ*; the second volume was posthumously[4] seen through the press by the German scholar Gerhard Kittel. Even though a planned third volume never appeared, Frey's *CIJ* was until recently the most comprehensive collection of the data available. Soon after the appearance of volume I in 1936, however, very severe criticisms were levelled against his work by, *inter alios*, the greatest epigrapher of the twentieth century, Louis Robert.[5] Frey was criticized not only for being sloppy in the presentation of the evidence but also for having overlooked quite a number of inscriptions and for having included others that did not belong there. The same criticisms were voiced after the appearance of volume II.

It was clear that, in spite of Frey's great efforts, *CIJ* was not the final word *in epigraphicis judaicis.* After the appearance of volume II in 1952, others continued the search for Jewish epigraphic material and in the four ensuing decades a number of partial collections saw the light. To mention only the most significant ones: Lewis published the inscriptions of Egypt,[6] Le Bohec those of the rest of North Africa,[7] Lüderitz those of the Cyrenaica,[8] Scheiber those of Hungary,[9] Leon those of Rome,[10] Mazar, Schwabe, Lifshitz, and Avigad those of Beth She'arim,[11] Lifshitz the synagogal donor inscriptions in general,[12] Roth-Gerson the Greek ones from the synagogues in Israel,[13] Hüttenmeister and Reeg all synagogue inscriptions from Israel,[14] and Rahmani the ossuaries from Israel.[15] Further, some general studies of the material were published.[16]

By the beginning of the 1990s, some 2,000 inscriptions were available to the scholarly world. Today, however, we have almost 3,500 Jewish inscriptions from the period between Alexander the Great and Muhammed (more than twice as many as in *CIJ*, which contained some 1,600). This dramatic increase in number is primarily due to the fact that, especially in the last two decades, the pace of the study of ancient Jewish inscriptions has greatly accelerated. A sudden flurry of epigraphic activity took place, with

[4] Frey died in 1940.
[5] See Robert 1937, 73–86, reprinted in his *Hellenica III*, 1946, 90–108. See also the criticisms by Ferrua 1941, 30–46.
[6] Lewis 1957–1964, III: 138–66.
[7] Le Bohec 1981, 165–207.
[8] Lüderitz 1983.
[9] Scheiber 1983.
[10] Leon 1960, 263–346. This work was reprinted with *addenda et corrigenda* by Osiek in 1995.
[11] Mazar, Schwabe, Lifshitz and Avigad, 3 vols., 1973–6. Vol. II contains the Greek inscriptions. Abbr. *BS*.
[12] Lifshitz 1967.
[13] Roth-Gerson 1987 (in Hebrew).
[14] Hüttenmeister and Reeg 1977.
[15] Rahmani 1994.
[16] Van der Horst 1991; Van Henten and van der Horst 1994.

David Noy as the driving force.[17] In 1992, together with William Horbury, Noy published *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt*;[18] in 1993 Noy as sole editor published the first volume of his *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe I: Italy (excluding the City of Rome), Spain and Gaul*;[19] and in 1995 the second volume appeared as *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe II: The City of Rome*.[20] A new peak of epigraphic activity was reached in 2004 when the long-awaited three volumes of the *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis* (*IJudO*) were published simultaneously.[21] Two of the three volumes were edited by Noy in collaboration with Bloedhorn and Panayotov (Greece, the Greek islands including Cyprus, the rest of eastern Europe, and Syria); only the volume on Asia Minor was done by Ameling alone.

Apart from these six volumes,[22] in 1999 E. Leigh Gibson published *The Jewish Manumission Inscriptions of the Bosporus Kingdom*.[23] Also in 1999, E. Miranda published the Jewish inscriptions of the Jewish community in Phrygian Hierapolis.[24] And in 2001 John Kroll finally published the Greek inscriptions of the Sardis synagogue (they had been found some forty years before!).[25] But all of this material (from the Bosporus, Hierapolis and Sardis) has now also been included in the volumes of *IJudO.* Further there was the usual host of minor publications in various journals.[26] The only area that is still lacking in these recent publications is the Land of Israel itself. For that gap we will have to await the completion of the Israeli project *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palestinae* (*CIIP*). When complete, the *CIIP* will be a new corpus of all inscriptions (pagan, Jewish, Christian), in all languages, arranged topographically, found in Israel (including the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights) and dating from the fourth century BCE to the seventh century CE. The corpus will include a full re-editing of every text, a drawing or photograph, textual apparatus, English

[17] In van der Horst 2005, 65–83, at p. 67, I call Noy 'the "Frey" of our days', but I add that the quality of Noy's work certainly surpasses that of Frey.

[18] Horbury and Noy 1992. See my review in *JSJ* 25 (1994), 320–3.

[19] Noy 1993. See my review in *JTS* 45 (1994), 701–4.

[20] Noy 1995. See my review in *JTS* 47 (1996), 256–9.

[21] Vol. I: Noy, Panayotov and Bloedhorn, 2004. Vol. II: Ameling 2004. Vol. III: Noy and Bloedhorn, 2004. See my review in *JSJ* 36 (2005), 65–83.

[22] On these volumes Rajak 2009, 93 n. 2, remarks: 'The publication of the new epigraphic corpora for Jewish inscriptions, *JIGRE*, *JIWE* (2 vols.), and *IJudO* (3 vols.), is perhaps the most important recent development in the field [i.e., the study of the Jewish diaspora].'

[23] Gibson 1999. See also Appendix 3 ('Inscriptions from the Bosporan Kingdom') in Levinskaya 1996, 228–46.

[24] Miranda 1999, 109–56.

[25] Kroll 2001, 5–127. See the discussion in van der Horst 2006a.

[26] For short surveys see Williams 2003–4. For the importance of epigraphical material for the study of ancient Judaism see Williams 1999.

translation and commentary. The estimate is that there will be between 6,000 and 7,000 texts in the corpus, at least some 1,800 of which (but probably more) are Jewish.[27] We will have to await the completion of that project before we can say that Frey's *CIJ* definitively belongs to the past.[28]

What can we learn from this material?

One of the most important aspects of Jewish epigraphy is that the inscriptions, especially the many in Greek, yield data that one cannot retrieve from the literary sources.[29] We have thousands of pages of Judaeo-Greek literature, Dead Sea Scrolls literature and rabbinic literature, but all of these abundant sources do not, or do not sufficiently, inform us about a number of aspects of Jewish life like the inscriptions do. *Saxa judaica loquuntur!* Let us briefly review some of these areas.[30]

The extent of the diaspora: several literary sources do mention the fact that in the centuries around the turn of the era a great number of Jews lived outside the Land of Israel. Best known are the following passages: Philo, *Legat.* 214; Josephus, *War* 2.398, 7.43; *Sib. Or.* 3.271; Strabo, *ap.* Josephus, *Ant.* 14.115; Seneca *ap*. Augustine, *Civ.* 6.11; Acts of the Apostles 2:9–11. These impressive lists of countries where Jews lived, and remarks to the effect that Jews lived in many regions and that their customs had become prevalent almost everywhere (cf. Seneca's famous dictum: *victi victoribus leges dederunt*, *ap*. Augustine, *Civ*. 6.10) leave no doubt about the impressive size of the Jewish diaspora. Yet this information is far from complete. To begin with, these passages reflect the situation in the first centuries BCE and CE, not that of later centuries. Moreover, it is the epigraphic material that shows us that the diaspora was even more extensive than the literary data suggest and that this situation prevailed also in later centuries. Anyone who takes a look at map B VI 18 ('Die jüdische Diaspora bis zum 7. Jahrhundert n. Chr.') of the *Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients* (*TAVO*)[31] will see that it is epigraphical material that has made us aware of Jewish presence in areas that are never mentioned in the ancient literary

[27] I owe this information to the kindness of Jonathan Price of Tel Aviv University who initiated the enterprise together with Hannah Cotton of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

[28] After the completion of this chapter the first three volumes of the *CIIP* project were published: Cotton *et al*. 2010; Ameling *et al*. 2011; Cotton *et al*. 2012.

[29] See now also Chester 2011. This fine article appeared only after the completion of the present contribution.

[30] I must omit from my discussion the fact that the practice of engraving epitaphs and donor inscriptions was adopted among Jews under Greek influence.

[31] Wiesbaden: Ludwich Reichert Verlag, 1992.

sources (e. g. Spain, Morocco, Germany, the Crimea, etc.).[32] Most of this epigraphic material is in Greek, even in Jewish Palestine. For instance, more than 95 per cent of the inscriptions from Asia Minor are in Greek, more than 90 per cent in Egypt, and so are some 80 per cent of those in Rome. (In this connection it is telling that of the 609 papyri from the Roman Near East in general found outside Egypt – the *vast* majority of which are from Roman and Byzantine Palestine – some 325 are in Greek: that is almost 55 per cent![33]) The question of whether these percentages reflect the degree to which Greek was spoken as the daily language of the Jews is a very complicated one that cannot be dealt with here,[34] but at any rate it can be taken for sure that Greek was spoken widely by Jews in the diaspora.[35]

Another area of research that has enormously benefited from Jewish epigraphy is that of onomastics. A glance in Tal Ilan's *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity*[36] makes abundantly clear how great the contribution of Jewish epigraphy is for our knowledge of Greek names borne by Jews. It is from inscriptions that we learn, more than from other sources, the extent to which Jews bore festal and theophoric names. Festal names[37] are names related to Jewish festal days or periods such as Shabbat or Pesach, for example, Sabbataios, Paschasios, Heortasios (Chaggai), Noumenios (Rosh Chodesh), etc. It is inscriptions (and papyri) that show us how widely used such names were. More striking are those personal names that contain pagan theophoric elements,[38] such as Isidorus (gift of Isis), Artemidorus (gift of Artemis), Zenodorus (gift of Zeus), Hermias (a derivation of Hermes), Heracleides, Serapion, Dionysia, even Venus.[39] Should we assume that the origin of these names was completely unknown to the Jews who gave their children such utterly pagan-sounding names? Or did they not care that their children bore a name with a pagan theophoric element? These are important questions that are probably unanswerable.[40]

Related to the last-mentioned problem is the occurrence of Greek mythological motifs and names in Jewish tomb inscriptions. There are epitaphs from Leontopolis which refer to Hades, the god of the netherworld, to Lethe, the river of forgetfulness in Hades (*JIGRE* 34, 38, 39), to

[32] A somewhat outdated but still useful survey of the Jewish diaspora can be found in Schürer 1986, 1–86. See also Barclay 1996.
[33] Based on Cotton, Cockle and Millar 1995.
[34] See van der Horst 2001.
[35] See Treu 1973.
[36] Ilan 2002–12 (4 vols.).
[37] See Williams 2005.
[38] Mussies 1994, esp. 247–8.
[39] A striking example on the Christian side is the name Origen (son of [the god] Horus).
[40] Inscriptions also shed more light on the names of Jewish congregations than do the literary sources; see Van der Horst 1991, 86–9.

Charon, the ferryman in Hades (*JIGRE* 141), and one from Beth She'arim that mentions 'mighty Moira', the Greek goddess of Fate (*BS* II.127). Even though it should be remembered that mythological names such as Hades, Lethe and Moira could be used in a figurative or metaphorical sense, it is still notable that these names with their pagan associations are not avoided here. Certainly these elements occur mainly in the epitaphs of two locations (Leontopolis and Beth She'arim), but that does not make them less significant. Moreover, there are other instances of Jewish compromises with Graeco-Roman culture as attested in inscriptions, such as the adoption of pagan funerary customs (annual banquets in memory of the deceased and decking of the tomb with flowers [*IJudO* II, 171]), Jewish attendance at the theatre and hippodrome (*IJudO* II, 15–16, 37; III, Syr10), undergoing a gymnasium education (*IJudO* I, Ach53; II, 22), pagan rituals such as incubation (*IJudO* I, Ach45), visiting pagan shrines (*JIGRE* 121–2), etc.[41]

Another major area in which the inscriptions yield data that the literary sources do not inform us about at all is that of the average age at death.[42] Twenty years ago, I figured out on the basis of the then available data (slightly less than 550 epitaphs that mention the age of the deceased) that the average age at death for Jews in the imperial period was 28.4 years (some 29 years for men and 27 for women). Even though the evidence has increased considerably in the meantime, these numbers need not be corrected significantly – they still remain below 30 years. But how representative are these data? With less than a thousand epitaphs mentioning an age at death over a period of some 1,000 years, that is, with data for less than one Jew every year, what do we really know?[43] And apart from this problem, there are a number of distorting factors. First, there is the problem of the great unevenness of the geographical distribution: some areas yield far more data on age at death than others; moreover, in cities it was far more usual to erect tombstones with inscriptions than in the countryside. Second, the chronological distribution is uneven as well: the third to fifth centuries of the Common Era yield much more evidence than the preceding ones. Third, there is the under-representation of young children and infants: some ancient cemeteries have a great number of tombs for infants but these have no epitaphs or only inscriptions without any indication of their age at death so that the rate of the actual infant mortality is not visible at all. The estimate of a modern authority on the demography of the

[41] See Williams 1999, 82–3. [42] See van der Horst 1991, 73–84.
[43] On this problem see van der Horst 2001.

Roman Empire that less than half of those born reached the age of five seems reasonable,[44] and that would imply that the average life expectancy was even lower than is often assumed (perhaps even lower than 25 years). Fourthly, there is a serious underrepresentation of women. Even though this is much more the case in pagan than in Jewish funerary epigraphy,[45] the percentage of Jewish women for whom the age at death is mentioned is no more than some 40 per cent. This is regrettable since we do know that women had a higher mortality rate than men owing to death from childbirth and general exhaustion.[46] So here, too, a more balanced set of data might have yielded a lower average of the age at death. Finally, there is the problem of the unreliability of the indications of age at death: far too many tombstones give ages ending in 0 or 5, especially for those above 20 years; after the age of 70 virtually all end in 0.[47] This is simply the result of the lack of knowledge of the exact age, so these indications can hardly be trusted. Furthermore, in pagan epitaphs one finds a striking number of very old people,[48] including people not only of 125, but also of 140, 160 or even 170 years of age, which are obviously exaggerations.[49] This, however, is an aspect in which Jewish grave inscriptions do definitely deviate from pagan epitaphs of the same periods. Although there is also much age-rounding in Jewish tomb inscriptions, to the best of my knowledge there are no epitaphs of which the Jewish provenance is certain which mention people older than 120 years. Such cases of exaggeration do not exist. What could be the reason for this? An educated guess is that a biblical text lurks in the background here: Gen. 6:3 says that God decreed about humankind that 'their days shall be one hundred twenty years'. Even though there were Jewish interpreters who argued that this limitation applied only to the generation of the Flood,[50] there were many others who saw it as valid for humankind in general. It is probable that it was the influence of this biblical verse that induced Jews to avoid any ascription of ages higher than 120 years to their deceased. So in this case the evidence teaches us indirectly how Jews were influenced by their biblical inheritance, an inheritance that lasts till the present day when Jews congratulate someone on his/her birthday with the wish *'ad me'ah we'esrim.* All in all,

[44] See Burn 1953, 1–31; also his review of H. Nordberg, *Biometrical Notes* (1963) in *JRS* 55 (1965), 253–7.

[45] In pagan epitaphs indicating age, men are sometimes twenty times more numerous than women; see Clauss 1973, esp. 405–6.

[46] See Burn 1953, 10–13. [47] On this phenomenon see Duncan Jones 1977, 333–53.

[48] See Kajanto 1968, esp. 19–20.

[49] These exaggerations do find parallels today among tribes in some developing countries.

[50] See van der Horst 2006b.

however hard it may be to handle the epigraphic evidence for age at death from a statistical and demographic point of view, it is the only evidence we have, and for that reason it deserves our attention.

Another aspect of Jewish life on which the epigraphic evidence sheds light is the non-rabbinic nature of diaspora Judaism. The inscriptions suggest that, by and large, diaspora communities remained outside the sphere of influence of the Rabbis till the early Middle Ages. To be sure, there are some sixty inscriptions that do mention 'rabbis' but the vast majority (more than fifty) are from Palestine and, moreover, it is far from certain whether the persons designated *rabbi* were rabbis in the technical sense of ordained community leader.[51] In the first place, in antiquity the term *rabbi* was applied to anyone of high standing in the community and hence often had the meaning of 'important person'.[52] Second, it is the inscriptions themselves that make clear that the real community leaders were the *archontes*, the *archisynagôgoi*, the *gerousiarchai*, etc. 'Rabbis' mentioned in inscriptions appear as donors, not as leaders of the synagogue, and it makes no sense to assume that all 'epigraphical rabbis' in antiquity were Talmudic scholars, as Shaye Cohen rightly remarks.[53] Even if some of the very few 'rabbis' mentioned in diaspora Jewish inscriptions may have been rabbis in our sense of the word,[54] it is clear that the term 'rabbinic Judaism' would be totally out of place as a characterization of the many Jewish communities in the western diaspora. These communities often flourished for centuries without any rabbis being present. That also explains why there are no inscriptions outside Palestine that reflect any specifically rabbinic ideas or practices.[55]

As Margaret Williams rightly remarks, 'Inscriptions reveal more clearly than any other type of source material the early emergence of the synagogue as the most characteristic feature of the established diasporan community and its development from simple prayer-hall into multi-purpose community centre.'[56] It is two inscriptions from third-century BCE Egypt that are the first secure attestations of synagogues as Jewish religious buildings (*JIGRE* 22 and 117). Synagogal functionaries (other than rabbis) are mentioned frequently in Judaeo-Greek inscriptions, especially throughout

[51] See Cohen 1981–2, 1–17. [52] See Levine 1989, 15.
[53] Cohen 1981–2, 14. Also Williams 1999, 80.
[54] E.g., *JIWE* I, 22 (Brusciano, fourth–fifth century), 36 (Naples, fifth–sixth century?), 86 (Venosa, sixth century), 186 (Tarragona, fifth–sixth century?).
[55] The exceptional mention of the Jewish festivals of Pesach and of Shavuot in *IJudO* II, 196 (Phrygian Hierapolis) is no exception to that rule.
[56] Williams 1999, 77.

the Roman period. Their functions are mentioned significantly more frequently than secular professions, which is indicative of their importance to the holders of these offices. It is apparently with some pride that commemorative and honorary inscriptions mention that the person(s) concerned is (are) *archôn*, *archisynagôgos*, *gerousiarchês*, *grammateus*, *hypêretês*, *patêr synagôgês*, *prostates*, *psalmôidos*, etc.[57] More often than not these inscriptions deny us any information about the duties and responsibilities of these offices, knowledge being taken for granted. Even so, this material shows us different kinds of synagogue organization – apparently there was great freedom in the diaspora to structure the community according to local needs. And, again, it also shows us the centrality and importance of the synagogue in the life of individual Jews.[58]

It may be surprising that some of these inscriptions mention women as leaders of the synagogue.[59] We find women as *archisynagôgos* or *archisynagôgissa* (*IJudO* I, Cre3, Sophia of Gortyn; *IJudO* II, 25, Theopempte of Myndos; *IJudO* II, 43, Rufina of Smyrna);[60] as *presbytera* or *presbyterissa* (*JIWE* I, 59, Beronike of Venosa; *JIWE* I, 62, Mannina of Venosa; *JIWE* I, 72, Faustina of Venosa; *JIWE* I, 163, Eulogia of Malta; *IJudO* I, Thr3, Rebecca of Bizye; *IJudO* I, Cre3, again Sophia of Gortyn; etc.); as *mater synagôgês* (*JIWE* I, 251, Simplicia of Rome; *JIWE* I, 542, Marcella of Rome; *JIWE* I, 577, the proselyte (!) Veturia Paula of Rome; *JIWE* II, 5, Coelia Paterna of Brescia, etc.).[61] There are some other, minor cases of synagogal nomenclature applied to women but the selection of instances listed here indicate that women may have fulfilled roles of leadership in diaspora communities. This has been denied, however, by those scholars who see in these titles nothing but honorary designations without any real responsibilities involved, possibly given because these women's husbands were the real functionaries. But it is significant that in other cases where wives of male functionaries are mentioned, they never bear a title themselves, and we should also bear in mind that, 'if the title were merely honorific for

[57] For references see van der Horst 1991, 85–101. The fullest recent treatments are Claußen 2002, 256–93, and Levine 2000, 387–428.

[58] We should remember that 'the single most important piece of evidence relating to the pre-70 Judaean synagogues generally, and Jerusalem synagogues in particular, is the Theodotos inscription' [= *CIJ* 1404] (Levine 2000a, 54). This inscription states that the building was erected for the purpose of 'reading of the Law and instruction in the commandments'.

[59] See Brooten 1982. Note that one finds these inscriptions only in the Greek diaspora, not in Jewish Palestine.

[60] If *archêgissa* is an abbreviation of *archisynagôgissa*, as suggested by de Lange 2001, 52–3, Peristeria of Phthiotic Thebes (*IJudO* I, Ach18) would be another candidate.

[61] It should be noted that the function of mother of the synagogue may be implied also in those cases where deceased women are called just 'mother'.

women, we should expect a considerably greater number to be attested'.[62] So even if the use of synagogal functions as honorary titles is attested, as in the case of infants,[63] this definitely does not exclude the possibility that in non-rabbinic synagogues of the western diaspora, women had more opportunities to climb the social ladder in their communities than was possible elsewhere. Again, it is only the inscriptions that inform us about that.

Attachment to the synagogue and the Jewish community with its values is also apparent from some telling epithets that several of the deceased are adorned with in their epitaphs. We find designations such as φιλοσυνάγωγος (loving the synagogue/community, *JIWE* II, 271 [Rome]), φιλόνομος (loving the Torah, *JIWE* II, 212, 502 [Rome]), φιλέντολ(ι)ος (loving the commandments, *JIWE* I, 163 [Malta]; *JIWE* II, 240,[64] 281, 564, 576 [Rome and of unknown provenance]), φιλοπένης (loving the poor, *JIWE* II, 240 [Rome]), φιλογείτων (loving her neighbours, *JIGRE* 84 [Leontopolis]); and so on. It is also noteworthy that the daughter of a Roman 'father of the synagogue', Cattia Ammias, is said to 'have lived a good life in Judaism' or to 'have lived a good Jewish life' (καλῶς βιώσασα ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ, *JIWE* II, 584). In *IJudO* I, Mac1 (Stobi), Claudius Tiberius Polycharmus, father of the synagogue at Stobi, proudly states that he 'lived all [his] life according to [the prescriptions of] Judaism' (πολειτευσάμενος πᾶσαν πολειτείαν κατὰ τὸν ἰουδαϊσμόν). These epithets and statements reveal a strong sense of Jewish identity and of attachment to the Jewish tradition.

A further notable observation is that it is only through epigraphical evidence that we learn about release (manumission) rituals of Jewish slaves. This evidence mainly comes from Delphi and the Bosporan kingdom.[65] For instance, from a second-century BCE inscription found at Delphi we learn that the slave, '*Ioudaios* by name, *Ioudaios* by race',[66] was sold to the god Apollo (*IJudO* I, Ach42), a not uncommon manumission procedure at the time (see also Ach43 and 44). Even though the involvement of Apollo was probably at the initiative of the manumittor, it is revealing to read

[62] Horsley 1987, 219.

[63] See, e.g., the case of the *nêpios archisynagôgos* of three years in Venosa (*JIWE* I, 53) and the twelve-year-old *grammateus* in Rome (*JIWE* II, 547).

[64] In this remarkable epitaph, the deceased, the *archôn* Priscus, is said to have been *philolaos, philentolos, philopenês*. Cf. *JIWE* II, 576.

[65] The relevant material can be found in *IJudO* I, Ach42–45, BS 5–9, 17–25; see also Gibson 1999. In the indices of *IJudO* I (392–4) one finds a very useful and complete survey of the terms and conditions of manumission of Jewish slaves.

[66] For *Ioudaios* as both a name and an ethnic label see Williams 1997, 249–62. Slaves often got ethnic personal names.

in another inscription that the liberated slave, Moschus, who is explicitly identified as a Jew, set up a stele on which he states that he had a dream in which the gods Amphiaraus and Hygieia ordered him to record his manumission on the stone and set it up by their altar (Ach45, third century BCE). This strikingly reveals the degree of assimilation that was possible among Jewish slaves of pagan owners. In the Bosporan inscriptions (most from the first century CE) we find that Jewish slaves were set free in the prayer-house (προσευχή = synagogue) and that the community of the Jews (συναγωγὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων) provided guardianship (e.g., BS5–7).[67] This final remark means that 'the synagogue is bound to uphold the contract between owner and now freed slave'.[68] Some other Bosporan manumissions, however, state that the Jewish slaves were set free 'under Zeus, Gê, and Helios' (BS20, 22), a common pagan Greek juridical formula, even though the transaction took place in the synagogue.[69] Whether the Jewish participants attached much significance to such formulae is doubtful, as in the case of the many instances of the Latin formula *dis manibus* (*DM*) on so many tombstones in the Jewish catacombs of Rome.

Another area that Jewish literary sources say almost nothing about is that of pagan donors of synagogues. The best-known example is mentioned in the New Testament. In the Gospel, Luke tells of a Roman centurion in Capernaum. The Jews of the town urge Jesus to help the man by healing his beloved slave, saying: 'He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our people and it is he who built our synagogue for us' (Luke 7:4–5). Epigraphical evidence corroborates this phenomenon. In an inscription from Acmonia in Phrygia it is said that the 'house' built by Julia Severa was restored by some prominent members of the local Jewish community who were honoured by the synagogue for their contributions (*IJudO* II, 168).[70] Julia Severa happens to be well known to us – she is mentioned in other inscriptions and on coins from Acmonia as well. In the 50s and 60s of the first century CE she was priestess of the local emperor cult. So she was definitely not Jewish; on the contrary, she played a prominent role in one of the pagan cults of the city. Even so, this inscription testifies to her warm interest in and sympathy for the Jewish community of Acmonia: she had the synagogue built at her own cost. Julia Severa was a woman from an aristocratic family (her son later became a senator in Rome), a

[67] It is somewhat confusing that the editors of *IJudO* I use the abbreviation BS for Black Sea while *BS* is also the current shorthand for *Beth She'arim*.

[68] Gibson 1999, 150. [69] See Williams 1998, 123; Gibson 1999, 119–21.

[70] See also Lifshitz 1967, 34–6 (no. 33).

lady who had close ties to members of the distinguished Roman family of the Turronii: one of them, Turronius Rapo, was a priest of the emperor cult as well and he is mentioned together with Julia Severa on coins of the city; and another member of that family, Turronius Cladus, is mentioned in our inscription as the 'head of the synagogue' (*archisynagôgos*) who saw to it that the restoration was carried out properly.[71] So he must have been a proselyte. The fact that here a socially very prominent woman from a distinguished family with an explicitly pagan role in the city makes such a generous gesture towards the Jewish community is a sign of a very successful integration of the Acmonian Jews and of the sympathy they had won with the non-Jewish inhabitants of the city. Here a single inscription provides us with a unique insight into gentile–Jewish relations in first-century CE Asia Minor.

Contrary to what we find in Christian epitaphs, biblical quotations in Jewish inscriptions are rare, but they do yield important information about the ongoing use of the various Greek Bible translations in the ancient diaspora.[72] The most often quoted biblical text is Prov. 10:7: 'May the memory of the righteous one be (for) a blessing.'[73] It is quoted rarely in Hebrew but more frequently in both the Greek version of the LXX and in the translation of Aquila, sometimes in a mixed form of both (occasionally in Latin).[74] The importance of this observation is that it enables us to see that in some Jewish communities the LXX was not discarded when Aquila's version had become available, as is so often mistakenly assumed. A variety of Greek Bible versions remained in use, not only in antiquity but also in the medieval period.[75] This use also indicates that most probably these communities held their synagogal services in Greek (as was also the case in some areas of Palestine).[76]

Finally, we should make some brief remarks on expressions of belief in the afterlife in epitaphs.[77] Unfortunately, most tomb inscriptions are silent about such a belief. Those which do yield information about some form of belief in life after death show us a great variety of ideas. The Jewish literary

[71] See Mitchell 1993, 9.

[72] See Cappelletti 2009, 128–41. Also van der Horst 1991, 37–9.

[73] The second biblical text in frequency is 1 Sam 25:29, 'May the soul of my lord be bound in the bundle of life.' This becomes, in various forms, the standard text on numerous tombstones in medieval and modern times.

[74] See *JIWE* I, 120, 122, 131, 133, 137; *JIWE* II, 112, 276, 307; *IJudO* I, Cre3.

[75] This is the purport of various contributions to the volume edited by de Lange *et al.* 2009. See also Rajak 2009, 305–6.

[76] On synagogue services in Greek see van der Horst 2001, 19.

[77] See van der Horst 1991, 114–26; Park 2000; Rutgers 2000.

sources from the Hellenistic and Roman period often create the impression that most Jews believed in either the resurrection of the body or the immortality of the soul (or related concepts such as astral immortality[78]), but the inscriptions clearly demonstrate that in the period many Jews still stuck to the pessimistic image depicted by the Hebrew Bible of humans' fate after death, that of a sombre 'life' in a gloomy netherworld (*She'ol*). Sometimes one finds a denial of afterlife reminiscent of what we know about the Sadducees.[79] There are fewer than a handful of inscriptions that do explicitly state that resurrection of the body was what one hoped for or believed in.[80] Even though it will always be hard to say how representative these inscriptions are for the Jewish people as a whole, we need not doubt that here, too, we can see that a wide variety of ideas about and attitudes toward afterlife were current among Jews till the end of antiquity.

One of the most important aspects of the study of Jewish inscriptions in Greek is that they reveal to us a world of Judaeo-Greek culture we would not know otherwise. Many scholars tend to think that the various forms of Judaeo-Greek cultural synthesis that came into being and flourished in the centuries between 300 BCE and 100 CE disappeared completely after the first century. It is for that reason that we do not know of any Jewish writing in Greek after Josephus: Jews, it is claimed, simply stopped writing in Greek by the end of the first century CE and apparently chose to express their Judaism in the Hebrew and Aramaic of the rabbinic literature. As Martin Goodman has rightly emphasized, this assumption 'is contradicted by the thousands of Greek inscriptions set up by Mediterranean Jews between the second and sixth centuries CE'.[81] Why Judaeo-Greek literature from these later centuries was not preserved by the Jews is much debated and cannot be discussed here.[82] In this connection it is important, however, to stress the major difference between the eastern and western diasporas. The linguistic divide between the two (a Semitic-speaking diaspora in the east, a Greek-speaking one in the west) had dramatic consequences.[83] It is not only the fact that the Rabbis handed down their halakhah in an oral form for a long time but also, and especially, the fact that, once these traditions were finally written down, they never sought to translate their Mishnah, their Talmudim, and their midrashim into Greek (let alone Latin) that

[78] For astral immortality see, e.g., *IJudO* II, 236.
[79] See on these cases chapter 3 of Park 2000.
[80] See *JIWE* II, 103; *BS* II, 162, 194.
[81] Goodman 2010, 67.
[82] Goodman, 2010, 84, suggests that the loss of this literature is due to the lack of interest of the Rabbis who wanted to preserve only writings in Hebrew and Aramaic (and, I would add, only writings that conformed to, and confirmed, their own ideas).
[83] See Edrei and Mendels 2007–8; Mendels and Edrei 2010.

prevented them from influencing the western diaspora. The language gap was not bridged and the consequence was that the Rabbis lost half of their constituency. Jewish communities in the west, isolated from the rabbinic network, could not contribute anything to the development of halakhah in the east. This situation changed only in the Middle Ages when, around the ninth century, the rabbinic movement arrived in Greek and Latin Europe. As has already been said, since we have almost no Judaeo-Greek literature that was written after the first century CE, and since the Jewish literature we do have from that period (rabbinic writings) does not inform us about the western diaspora, it is again only epigraphy (and, of course, archaeology) that allows us glimpses into the rich non-rabbinic Jewish culture of this diaspora.

To conclude, what we learn from Jewish inscriptions in Greek is, *inter multa alia*, that there was a huge, mainly Greek-speaking diaspora in the west, not dominated by rabbis, with a flourishing culture, reading their Bible in one of the available Greek versions, in varying degrees of acculturation but often reasonably integrated into Graeco-Roman society, with a characteristic onomastic tradition, with religious communities where in some places women probably had greater opportunities to gain a leadership role than elsewhere, but with as high an infant mortality as elsewhere in the Roman Empire. In short, better than the literary sources, inscriptions bring before our eyes the extraordinary diversity of Jewish life and thought in late antiquity. Much more could and should be said about this important subject, for instance, that inscriptions are our best evidence of Jewish participation in city life of the Imperial period; that the famous Aphrodisias inscription (*IJudO* II, 14) gave a decisive turn to the modern debate about the existence of the so-called Godfearers; that the many linguistic errors in the text of the inscriptions give us valuable insights into the way Jews pronounced Greek (and Latin); and so on.[84] The author hopes, however, that the small selection of evidence presented here makes clear that Judaeo-Greek epigraphy is a highly relevant area of research for the study of early Judaism, and especially Judaeo-Greek studies.

[84] But, as Margaret Williams rightly remarks, '[o]n the deficit side, we may note the limited contribution epigraphy makes to our understanding of the beliefs and practices of non-affluent Jews' (1999, 92).

CHAPTER 15

The Rabbis, the Greek Bible and Hellenism

Philip Alexander

Does the Rabbis' attitude specifically towards the Greek Bible throw any light on the wider question of their attitude towards and interaction with the Graeco-Roman culture of their day? Its potential to do so is obvious. Greek translations of the Bible are mentioned frequently in rabbinic literature, and the Rabbis express quite decided views on them, but to what extent do these views reflect or illuminate their attitudes towards Hellenism? I shall argue that they do, though not in the obvious ways one might expect. One should not argue, for example, that since the Rabbis knew Greek translations of the Bible, they must have been comfortable in Greek, and this is evidence that they were Hellenized. That would be much too simplistic. But other more nuanced yet useful conclusions can be drawn. First, however, we must set the rabbinic traditions about the Greek Bible in context, and that means considering them in the light of the Rabbis' doctrines of Scripture and of Bible translation. Only when we have done this will we be in a position to address the implications of those traditions for the broader question of the Rabbis and Hellenism.

1 The category of targum/translation

We begin with the rabbinic category of translation itself. The root 'to translate' in rabbinic texts is *trgm* from which are derived the verb *tirgem* and the nouns, *targum* = 'translation', and *ha-metargem*, *meturgeman*, *turgeman*, and *targeman* = 'translator'. Its semantic field is very similar to that of the Greek *hermeneuō*/*hermeneia* and the Latin *interpretor*/*interpretatio*, that is to say from a basic sense of 'to explain a word or statement by another word or statement', the root was used to cover both (a) interpretation into another language, i.e., translation, and (b) interpretation in the same language. This double sense is clear from rabbinic usage, because although the verb *tirgem* and the nouns *targum* and *ha-metargem* always

seem to be used of *translation* from one language into another,[1] the nouns *meturgeman* and *turgeman* can mean both 'translator' and 'expositor'. It is in the latter sense that the spokesman of a great sage is called a *meturgeman*, a function which later came to be covered by the term *amora*.[2] This office of *meturgeman/amora* to a sage was an odd one: it was probably modelled on the Moses–Aaron relationship in the Bible, in which Aaron acted as Moses' 'prophet' or spokesman (Exod. 7:1): it cast the rabbinic sage in the role of a second Moses. Great sages did not always themselves expound in public, but left it to a trusted student to speak on their behalf, with them perhaps giving the student 'heads of discourse' (*ra'shei peraqim*) on which to speak. Thus when we read, as we not infrequently do, that 'Rabbi X expounded before (*darash lifnei*) Rabbi Y', the meaning appears to be that he acted as his *meturgeman/amora*. There is no question here of translation into another language. Such a *meturgeman* would have had to be a scholar in his own right, and from this usage, I think, emerged the use of *Turgeman/Targeman* in the sense of the Torah scholar attached to a Beit Din.[3] The role here is probably similar to that of an *assessor* in the Roman courts of the period. Not all benches of judges would have been made up of legal experts: the *Turgeman* was the legal expert attached to the court, the expositor of the Jewish law.

Meturgeman, however, could also designate the translator of Scripture in synagogue,[4] though *Ha-Metargem* is commoner in this sense. There may be a nuance here: *Ha-Metargem* basically means 'he who translates', and a variety of ordinary members of the congregation could play this role (including minors: *m. Meg.* 4.6). *Meturgeman*, however, refers to someone appointed to hold this office on a regular basis, who might even receive a small stipend for his pains. This was probably more rare, and only within the financial means of larger, wealthier synagogues.[5] *Meturgeman*, then, refers fundamentally to an *office*, *Ha-Metargem* fundamentally to a *function*.

Two points emerge from this lexical survey, which are important for our analysis:

[1] *Tirgem* = 'translate': e.g., *y. Meg.* 1, 71c, cf. Ezra 4:7; *targum* = 'translation': e.g., *m. Meg.* 2:1; *ha-metargem* = 'translator': e.g., *b. Ber.* 45a.

[2] *t. Meg.* (Lieberman) 3:41; *y. Meg.* 4, 75c; *b. Ber.* 27b; *b. Moʾed Qaṭ.* 21a; *b. Ketub.* 8b; *b. Giṭ* 60b; *b. Tem.* 14b.

[3] *m. Mak.* 1:9; *t. Sanh.* (Zuckermandel) 7.7.

[4] *m. Meg.* 4:4; *b. Meg.* 23a–23b, 32a. *Pirqe R. El.* 39 (to Gen. 42:23) comments on Joseph's skill as a *Turgeman* in translating the languages of the various peoples who came to Egypt for food during the great famine. Cf. Pseudo-Jonathan and Neofiti to the biblical verse.

[5] *b. Pesaḥ.* 50b. The text implies that the remuneration was pitifully small.

(1) First, rabbinic literature knows of the category of Bible translation, and, indeed, as we shall see, has a great deal to say about it. The category is actually occupied by two groups of texts – Bible translations into Aramaic, and Bible translations into Greek, though the possibility of versions into other languages (e.g., Median, Elamite, Egyptian, etc.[6]) is acknowledged in principle. *Targum* most often means in rabbinic literature an *Aramaic* translation, because these translations were by far the best known in rabbinic circles (indeed, *Targum* in some contexts seems to mean *Aramaic*),[7] but it is perfectly clear that the Rabbis also recognized that at this level of generality Greek versions were targums as well.[8] This is important, because it allows us to argue, with due caution, from how they regarded Aramaic targums to how they would have regarded Greek targums.

(2) The second point that emerges from our lexical sketch is that the Rabbis would have seen *translation* of Scripture as a species of *exposition* of Scripture: it involves a kind of *derash*. This, of course, makes it sensitive, because it raises the question of whether the translation has interpreted Scripture correctly from the rabbinic point of view. Condemnation of a translation because it failed to explain Scripture correctly does not entail rejecting translation of Scripture per se – a distinction, perhaps, not always properly observed in the scholarly literature.

2 The status of Bible translations in rabbinic halakhah

The Rabbis were clearly aware, then, of the existence of translations of the Bible, but how did they regard them? First let us consider their attitude towards Bible translation per se. The Rabbis were lawyers, and this is, therefore, not fundamentally for them a question of whether they *liked* the translations or not, or whether they would have rebuked you, or even put you under the ban (*ḥerem*), if they had found you using one. It is a question of what status these translations would have had in rabbinic law, and this has to be explored through a number of concrete legal concepts. Do Bible translations 'defile the hands' in the way that a *Sefer Torah* in Hebrew 'defiles the hands'? If fire breaks out on Shabbat is it permissible to rescue them from a building and carry them into the street, as you would do in the case of a *Sefer Torah* in Hebrew? In the case of a Torah scroll in Hebrew, the high sanctity of the object overrides even the sanctity of

[6] *b. Šabb.* 115a; *b. Meg.* 18a. [7] *m. Yad.* 4:5; *t. Šabb.* 13:2; *b. Meg.* 3a. [8] *y. Meg.* 1, 71c.

Shabbat, so there is no problem, but do Torah translations into another language have the same status? Is it possible to write a Bible translation in such a way that it would be kosher for use in the public reading of Torah in synagogue, either on its own, or accompanying the reading of the Torah in Hebrew? If anyone were to hear the Torah read in synagogue on Shabbat only from a translation, would they have fulfilled their religious duty of hearing Torah? When it is no longer fit for purpose, is it permissible to destroy a translation of Torah, either by reusing it for other purposes (e.g., by scrubbing it clean and writing another text over it), or even by throwing it on the scrap-heap or burning it, or, should one lay it aside in a Genizah? These questions are all fundamentally interlinked: they are facets of the *theological* problem of whether or not targums of Scripture belong to the category of *Kitvei Qodesh*, 'holy writings'. Implicit throughout is a comparison: could the sanctity of the Hebrew Torah scroll ever pass over, so to speak, to a Greek Torah scroll? This is the underlying question, and it is explored in rabbinic literature in a characteristically concrete, jurisprudential way.

The Rabbis tackled the question with great vigour and subtlety, but one should note how important the discussion is in what can be regarded as the 'textual spine' of the rabbinic tradition. A number of key halakhot in the Mishnah – in Megillah (above all), in Sanhedrin, in Shabbat and in Yadayim – generate a sophisticated legal debate which develops chronologically through the Tosefta, the Yerushalmi and the Bavli down to the responsa and codes of the Middle Ages.[9] It is this tradition, I would argue, that defines the *rabbinic* attitude towards Bible translation, and it is on the basis of these texts that I speak about the *Rabbis'* point of view. All the other references to Bible translation in rabbinic literature, particularly in aggadic sources and contexts, are ancilliary to this, and, though often interesting, should not be given the same weight as the core, halakhic texts. These are where we need to start.

From a cursory reading of this debate three broad points can be made.

1. First, it is clear that no consensus ever emerged as to the halakhic status of Bible translations: basically two positions are argued. At the lenient end of the spectrum were those who seem prepared to concede in principle

[9] Key passages are: Writing a Torah scroll: *m. Meg.* 1:8; *t. Sanh.* (Zuckermandel) 4:7; *y. Meg.* 1, 71b–72a; *b. Meg.* 8b–9b; *b. Sanh.* 21b–22a; *Deut. Rab.* 1:1; *Mas. Sop.* 16:1–2. Reading/hearing Torah: *m. Meg.* 2:1–2; *t. Meg.* (Lieberman) 2:5; *y. Meg.* 2, 72d–73a; *b. Meg.* 18a. Saving from fire: *m. Šabb.* 16:1; *t. Šabb.* 13:2–4; *b. Šabb.* 115a–115b. Rendering the hands unclean: *m. Yad.* 4:5. Hiding away: *m. Šabb.* 16.1, *t. Šabb.* 13.2; *y. Šabb.* 16, 5c; *b. Šabb.* 115a. For the medieval codes see especially Maimonides, *Yad: Hilkhot Tefillah* 12:10–14, and Shulḥan ʿArukh, *Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 145, 285.

that a targum could be accorded the status of *Kitvei Qodesh*. This view was classically embodied in the ruling in *m. Meg.* 1:8 that 'Scrolls may be written in any language.' It is clearly an old view, which may go back to the first century, since it is modified in the second century by Shimᶜon ben Gamliel, though even he still allows a Torah scroll to be written in *Greek*. The implication of this in halakhah is rather startling, because it implies that such scrolls, written in languages other than Hebrew, would defile the hands, could be used on their own to fulfil the obligation of reading and hearing the Torah in synagogue (at least, perhaps, for those who spoke the language of the translation), should be saved, if possible, from fire on Shabbat, and, when no longer fit for liturgical use, should not be deliberately destroyed but 'hidden' away in a Genizah.

At the opposite end of the spectrum lies the stringent view which totally denies to targum the status of *Kitvei Qodesh*. At its most succinct this view claims that only the Torah written as a scroll in Hebrew, in the Assyrian script, on skin of a particular type, and in a certain kind of ink can be accorded this status. Only the use of such a text fulfils the duty of public reading and hearing of the Torah, only such a text defiles the hands, and should be saved from fire on Shabbat, and put in a Genizah when it is beyond repair. Behind the stringent view lies an interesting theological position which locates the word of God *in a certain graphic and physical form of the text*. This idea has implications for interpretation. To take a very simple example. If the Torah opens with the letter *beit* to signify that one should not speculate about what God did before creation, nor about what is above (in heaven) nor about what is below (in Gehinnom), then this will work only if the opening letter is in Hebrew in *Ashurit* script. It will not work well for the palaeo-Hebrew script, and certainly not for Greek.[10] Behind the lenient view seems to lie the concept that the Word of God resides more in the *ideas* expressed by the Hebrew text. If those ideas can be accurately conveyed in another language, then the translation acquires the sanctity of the original. Everything turns on the accuracy of the translation: the more accurate it is, the holier the text becomes.

The stringent position may imply a doctrine of the untranslatability of Scripture. The untranslatability of Scripture is argued in our sources on broadly three grounds.

(a) The first is the impossibility of translation. This is the meaning of the famous dictum in *t. Meg.* (Lieberman) 3:41, 'He who translates a verse

[10] See *Gen. Rab.* 1:10.

according to its form is a liar, and he who adds is a blasphemer.' The argument is that you can translate Torah in only one of two ways: either you translate it 'according to its form', by which, I take it, is meant a one-to-one translation that is isomorphic with the original. Or you make changes to accommodate the target language. Both are roundly condemned: one leads to lying, the other to blasphemy. Conclusion: Don't translate! The argument is deployed against translation specifically of Torah, where so much is at stake, not against translation per se. In other words this dictum should not be taken, as some have been tempted to do, as an early version of the *traddutore traditore* theme.

(b) The second argument, which can be seen as a weaker version of the first, is found in *Massekhet Soferim* 1.7 and *Massekhet Sefer Torah* 1.6: it simply asserts that Scripture cannot be translated *adequately* (*ʿal ṣorkah*), with the implication that it should not be done.

(c) The third argument, found in *Tanḥuma* (Buber) *Vayyera'* 6.6 and parallels,[11] makes a case on the grounds of political expediency. It envisages the nations of the world (the Christians) and Israel appearing before God, each claiming to be God's sons, because each possesses God's Torah. How will the Holy One, blessed be He, resolve the situation? He will say: They are my true sons who possess my mysteries? And what are God's mysteries? Answer: the Mishnah. The argument is oblique, but nonetheless telling: it is used overtly to argue against translating the Mishnah, but it implies it was a disaster for Israel that the Torah was ever translated, because it allowed the nations to claim to be Israel. The moral is: don't make the same mistake twice! Translation results in vulgarizing and publicizing abroad God's mysteries, and that is why, in some traditions, nature itself expresses its disapproval[12] when translations of Scripture are made. Translation of Scripture is simply not a good idea: it can lead to the usurpation of Israel's identity and her place in the world. The argument is no longer one based on impossibility, or inadequacy; it is a matter of political expediency. By way of contrast, behind the lenient position may lie the idea that the Torah was offered to the seventy nations, and could have been written in any of the seventy languages of the world.[13] It

[11] Tanḥuma (Warsaw), *Vayyera'* 5.5 and *Ki Tissa'* 34; *Pesiq. Rab.* 5:1; *Yalqut Shimʿoni*, *Hosea* 525.

[12] *b. Meg.* 3a: an earthquake greets the translation of the Prophets into Aramaic. Cf. *Megillat Taʿanit Batra*: 'On 8th Tevet the Torah was written in Greek in the days of King Talmai, and darkness came upon the world for three days.'

[13] *Siprei Deuteronomy* 343; *Mek. R. Ish.*, *Baḥodesh* 5. For a survey of this widespread tradition see Ginzberg 1909–28 (repr. 1968), 3: 80–2, and 6: 30–1.

was only because it was the Jewish people who accepted it that it was, in the end, promulgated in Hebrew. If the Greeks had accepted it, it would, presumably, have been provided to them in Greek.[14]

Between the lenient and the stringent poles lie a number of possible mediating positions, which would treat Bible translations as quasi-Scripture, i.e., though they are not exactly on the same footing as Hebrew Torah scrolls, neither are they to be regarded as totally secular. In other words, while they possess some of the attributes of *Kitvei Qodesh*, they do not possess them all. Thus some may have held that while Bible translations may not 'defile the hands', nevertheless they should be 'hidden away'.[15]

2. The second general point that emerges from an overview of the rabbinic evidence is that there seem to be no obvious differences in attitude between sources from Palestine and sources from Babylonia. The same range of positive and negative opinions is found in both. There may have been subtle differences as to the role that Bible translations played in the rabbinical communities of Eretz-Israel and Bavel. Arguably they were more central in the latter than the former. Bible *commentary* never developed to the same level in Bavel as it did in Eretz-Israel: all our great classic midrashim are products of the west, though some of them (e.g., Lamentations Rabbah) were transmitted to the east and underwent redaction there. Bible exegesis per se never seemed to have formed part of the curriculum of the Beit Midrash in the east, as it most certainly did in the west, nor was the synagogue *derashah* so highly developed there. As a result the eastern communities were more heavily reliant on the Aramaic Bible translations of Onkelos and Jonathan, which they had received (as their own traditions testify) from the west, for their basic Bible exegesis. In the west, though Bible translations were, to be sure, known, the Rabbinate came to put much more stress on exposition of Scripture in the form of straightforward, lemmatic commentary, and there was, by all accounts, a lively tradition of synagogue preaching.

The Aramaic incantation bowls provide evidence of the centrality of the Aramaic targums to the religious life of the eastern diaspora. The Bible is quoted not in Hebrew but in Aramaic – in fact basically in the targums of Onkelos and Jonathan. The influence of the Onkelos–Jonathan targums is pervasive in the bowls, because their writers seem to have tried to copy their dialect, which was most certainly not their own vernacular, owing

[14] Note *Siprei Deuteronomy* 343. [15] See the discussion in *b. Šabb.* 115a.

to its prestige and sanctity. One suspects that the Aramaic Bible would have played the same role in religious life and identity formation among Jews in the eastern diaspora as the Greek Bible did among Jews in the Greek-speaking west, and that many of the issues that Tessa Rajak has identified and documented in the latter case would equally have applied to the former.[16] Be this as it may, one thing is clear: Bible translations were an issue for both communities, and this is why writings from both communities address the status of these versions. It is perhaps unexpected how much the Babylonian sources have to say about the *Greek* Bible, which cannot have been nearly as prominent in their milieu as it was in the west. The rival version of the Bible in the east would have been the Peshitta, which, of course, like the Septuagint, may have begun life as a Jewish Syriac targum which was appropriated by the Church.[17] When the Bavli talks about 'our Targum (*Targum didan*)' (*b. Qidd.* 49a) the implicit contrast, I think, is not between Onkelos–Jonathan, on the one hand, and the so-called Palestinian targums, on the other: I know of no solid evidence that the latter were known in the east. The contrast is between Onkelos–Jonathan, on the one hand, and the Peshitta on the other. The Babylonian rabbinic authorities may have retained the traditions about the Greek Bible translations because they provided them with a useful basis on which to reflect halakhically on Bible translation in general, but the range of their reflections and opinions is similar to that of their colleagues in the west.

3. It is possible to see attitudes and emphases with regard to Bible translation change over time. On the whole, the earlier views seem more positive and liberal. Certainly the classic liberal position is, as already noted, early, and much of the Amoraic discussion appears to be rowing back from it in various ways. This goes hand-in-hand with the development in the Amoraic period of a strong emphasis on the primacy of Hebrew, and on forms of midrashic interpretation which will only work on the Hebrew text. But the early, liberal views were not lost: they continued to be transmitted and discussed, and there is evidence of more positive attitudes towards translation re-emerging in some quarters in the Gaonic and medieval periods, at least with regard to the Greek translation.[18]

[16] Rajak 2009. On the politics of translation see further Seidman 2006 and Simon-Shoshan 2007.

[17] Weitzman 1999.

[18] See *Sep. Yosippon* 12, ed. Flusser, 1: 64–6; *Sep. ha-Zikhronot* 9.4, ed. Yassif, 286–7.

3 The case of the Aramaic targum

As we have already noted, the Bible translation which was best known to the Rabbis was the Aramaic targum, and their attitude towards that helps to define their attitude towards Bible translation in general. *b. Meg.* 3a takes a positive view of the origins of the Aramaic version. The Pentateuch was translated by Onkelos the proselyte 'from the mouth of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Joshua'. At the very least this implies that these two great rabbinic sages sanctioned it, and the wording, if pressed, might even suggest that he took it down from them by dictation. This tradition originally referred to the Greek translation of Aquila,[19] but in Babylonia it was applied to the Aramaic translation of the Torah which circulated there, and was held in high esteem. An alternative account in the same passage of Talmud carries the origins of the Pentateuch targum back to the time of Ezra (Neh. 8:8).[20] The targum of the Prophets is given no less exalted a pedigree: it was composed by Jonathan ben ᶜUzziel from the mouth of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. But a certain uneasiness about translation creeps in: the Land of Israel quakes over an area of 400 by 400 parasangs, when Jonathan completes his work. He is forced to defend himself against the charge that he has revealed God's secrets to mankind, and a *Bat Qol* goes forth forbidding him to extend his efforts to the third division of the canon – the Writings.[21] Translations with such a perceived origin could not be ignored, and were bound to carry considerable authority, so what the Rabbis sought to do was not to suppress them, but rather to regulate them, both as to content, and as to the manner in which they were used, particularly in connection with the public reading of the Torah in synagogue.[22] In the liturgical context, a series of rules was enunciated, the clear purpose of which was to ram home the point that the translation was subordinate to the Hebrew original: the

[19] See *y. Meg.* 1, 71c: 'Rabbi Jeremiah said in the name of Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Ba: Aqilas the proselyte translated the Torah before Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Joshua, and they praised him and said, *You are fairer than the sons of men* (Ps. 45:3).' The quotation from the Psalm involves a clever pun: *Yofyafita mi-benei adam* = 'You have used the language of Japheth better than anyone else'. The language of Japheth is Greek: see *Gen. Rab.* (Vilna) 36.8. In the Table of the Nations, Javan (Greece) is a son of Japheth (Gen. 10:2).

[20] For the same tradition see: *y. Meg.* 4, 74d; *b. Ned.* 37b; *Gen. Rab.* (Vilna) 36.8 (cf. Theodor-Albeck 36.26–7). *Sifra Shemini* to Leviticus 10:10 finds an allusion to targum in Torah itself.

[21] *b. Meg.* 3a.

[22] For regulation as to content, see the various recensions of the so-called Lists of Forbidden targumim: *m. Meg.*4:10; *t. Meg.* (Lieberman) 3:31–41; *b. Meg.* 25a–25b. For regulation of the manner of delivering the targum in synagogue, see, e.g.: *y. Meg.* 4, 74d (targum must be delivered orally); *b. Meg.* 32a (reader must not prompt the translator); *b. Ber.* 45a (translator must not raise his voice).

translation could never take the place of the Hebrew, but could only be used alongside it. The Hebrew was always *read*, and read first. It was delivered from a written scroll, whereas the targum had to be recited from memory. Every effort had to be made to avoid confusing the Hebrew and the Aramaic. There is absolutely no reason to suppose that the Rabbis who sanctioned the Aramaic targum would not have approved for similar use any other Bible translation done under reliable auspices, provided it was delivered in the same way. Bible translations for them would have been acceptable provided that (1) they came from a reliable source that guaranteed their interpretations were sound, and (2) their subordination to the original Hebrew was fully acknowledged.

4 The Greek Bible

The other concrete tradition of Bible translation which the Rabbis knew was into Greek. Two versions are mentioned in the sources: the Torah of King Talmai, which is clearly a reference to the Septuagint, supposedly translated at the instigation of King Ptolemy, and the translation done by Aqilas the Proselyte, a reference to the version of Aquila. It is highly unlikely that they knew either version well. Neither they, nor the communities they served, needed them. They were Aramaic speakers, and though some of them may have used 'street Greek' from time to time, their knowledge of the higher registers of the language was meagre. This is borne out by the Greek loanwords in rabbinic Hebrew, which, though numerous, are on the level of everyday speech. There was also in some rabbinic circles active prejudice against the study of both the Greek language and literature, possibly even an attempt by some authorities to ban it, though what such a ban in practice might have meant, or how widely it might have been observed or for how long, are deeply unclear.[23] Others took a more positive view of the language, some claiming that it was the *only* language into which the Scripture could be translated,[24] thus preferring it even to Aramaic. One thing is abundantly clear from even a cursory inspection of the traditions about the Greek versions in rabbinic literature: the Rabbis had really no direct knowledge of them. What they did know was a handful of sometimes garbled traditions which are repeated again and again with a variety of glosses.

[23] The key texts are: *m. Soṭ*. 9:14; *t. ʿAbod. Zar*. 1:20; *b. Menaḥ*. 99b; *b. B. Qam*. 83a. For a discussion see Alexander 2001.

[24] This may be the meaning of *m. Meg.* 1:8, which designates Greek as the only foreign language in which Torah scrolls may be written (see the discussion of this in *b. Meg*. 8b–9b).

4.1 The Torah for King Talmai

It is evident from the few aggadic traditions about King Talmai (Ptolemy) not about his Torah that the Rabbis had little idea historically as to when he lived. The story of his Torah comprises two elements (see, e.g., *b. Meg.* 9a–b[25]): first the account of how it came to be written, which is clearly a variant of the Aristeas legend, and second a list of the changes that were deliberately made in that version by the Sages who translated it. From a source-critical perspective it seems obvious that these two elements were originally independent of each other and only later woven together. In the earliest versions the story is very truncated, and in fact one form of it speaks of five elders, not seventy-two (*ʾAbot R. Nat.* B37). As time goes by, however, the circumstantial detail becomes fuller till, at its fullest, seventy-two Jewish Sages in seventy-two different houses each produces his version of the Torah and all agree even down to the changes which the translators deliberately introduced into their translation. It would have been miraculous enough if they had produced precisely the same Greek version, but to have agreed on exactly the same changes to the wording of the original was even more astonishing and could only, as one account puts it, be the result of divine guidance (*Massekhet Soferim* 1.7).

The list of changes is not the same in every case, but there is a core of around ten which is common to all the versions. The total number of verses cited is around eighteen. They are given in Hebrew, though it is clear that what is in view, in the final version of the tradition, is a *Greek* translation. One has to assume that the changes effected in the Greek text have, supposedly, been rendered back into Hebrew to ease comparison with the original, and to aid the comprehension of a non-Greek-speaking audience. But there is a problem with the bulk of the list: the alleged changes in the Greek do not in fact correspond to any texts attested in our extant Greek manuscripts of the Greek Bible, save arguably for the avoidance of the Greek term *lagōs* ('hare') for the Hebrew *ʾarnevet*, because of the significance of the word *lagōs* for the king.[26] Given, in

[25] Parallels: *ʾAbot R. Nat.* B37; *y. Meg.* 1, 71d; *Mek. R. Ish.*, *Boʾ* 14; *Tanḥ.* (Buber), *Shemot* 19; *Tanḥ.* (Warsaw), *Shemot* 22; *Massekhet Soferim* 1.7; *Massekhet Sefer Torah* 1.6; *Yal. Shimʿoni*, *Bereʾshit* 3; *Midrash Ha-Gadol* to Exod. 4:20; *Sefer Maʿasiyyot* 61 (ed. Gaster, 37–8). The standard discussion of the Torah of King Talmai traditions is Veltri 1994. See further: Aptowitzer 1908–9; Tov 1984; Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006; Veltri 2006; Veltri 2009b.

[26] The tradition, garbled though it may be, may have some substance to it, or at least shows some genuine knowledge of the Greek Bible. *ʾArnevet*, 'hare', occurs only twice in the Torah, in Lev. 11:6 and Deut. 14:7, and in both cases the Septuagint chooses to translate it by *dasupous*, 'the rough-footed one' (LSJ 370b), rather than *lagōs*. The Hebrew translation of this offered in rabbinic

addition, that the form in which this particular change is introduced in the list is different from that of the other items, and that this item comes out of place at the very end, a case can surely be made that, source-critically speaking, the other items on the list are a later addition. The original form of the tradition went something like this: 'Five/seventy-two elders wrote for King Talmai a Torah in Greek, and they wrote for him *the hairy-footed one*, and did not write for him *the hare*, because Talmai's wife was called *'Arnevet*, lest he say, "The Jews have made fun of me and put the name of my wife in the Torah".' Into this was later intruded an anonymous list of changes to the wording of the *Hebrew* Torah, on the assumption that these changes were actually changes made in the *Greek* version of the Bible, and the base story was recast to accommodate the addition. By marrying up two quite independent and disparate traditions, the anonymous list of changes to the Hebrew was given some sort of historical context, and also, incidentally, divine sanction. If this theory is correct then the list of changes (with the exception of the *lagōs/dasupous* tradition) is of absolutely no historical significance for the study of the Septuagint.

The list in itself is not so very puzzling. It belongs to a tradition of Jewish textual scholarship, culminating in the early Middle Ages in the production of the Masorah, but beginning quite early in Judaism, and alluded to in various places in midrash. I am not convinced that this kind of scholarship was rabbinic: it may have belonged more to the circles of the Torah scribes, or even to priestly lore. But the Rabbis were aware of it, and they certainly drew upon the list of changes: we find each individual item popping up in midrash on the relevant verses right down to the Middle Ages.[27] The changes themselves seem motivated in the main by two considerations: (1) the desire to avoid doctrinal misunderstanding, and in particular to deny comfort to those who would argue that Scripture sanctions the view that there is a multiplicity of powers in heaven; and (2) the desire not to cast the Fathers and, indeed, the Mothers of the nation in too unfavourable a light. One might compare the *Tiqqunei Soferim* or

literature is *ṣeʿirat ha-raglayim* = 'the young-footed one', but this is probably a phonetic corruption of *śeʿirat ha-raglayim*, 'the hairy-footed one'. Rabbinic tradition knew that *lagōs* was some sort of name associated with Ptolemy, but misled by the feminine gender of its Hebrew equivalent *'arnevet*, assumed that it must have applied to a female relative of the king, rather than to the king himself. In *b. Meg.* 9b it is the king's wife. In *Lev. Rab.* 13:5 it is the king's mother. The tradition may be ultimately Alexandrian. Jews there might well have been sensitive to including the *lagōs* among unclean animals. See further David J. Wasserstein 1998, but for a contrary view see Pearce 2007.

[27] They are often introduced by the formula: 'This is one of the things which they altered for King Talmai' (*Gen. Rab.* 8:11; 38.10; 48.17; *Exod. Rab.* 5:5)

the Lists of Forbidden Targumim.[28] What is not entirely clear is whether these changes were actually supposed to be written into the texts of Torah scrolls, or constituted a sort of *Qerei* – the text would have been left as it was, but the reader would have *read* it differently when delivering the *Parashah* in public. The latter strikes me as highly plausible. In other words the changes belong to the reading-tradition; they are part of the oral not the written Torah.

However the historical development of this tradition went, there can be no doubt that in its final form it affords high sanction to the Greek version, and this fact is clearly seized upon by those authorities who wanted to give a high status to translations in general. The implication is that the Greek version was produced by a divine miracle: if not inspired like the original (there is no claim that it was 'said in the holy spirit'), it was nevertheless the result of God putting 'counsel' (*ᶜeṣah*) into the hearts of the translators. The echoes of the Aristeas legend are clear, but they are not so specific as to suggest that the Rabbis knew *Aristeas*. The earliest that direct knowledge of the Aristeas legend is attested in rabbinic circles is the Middle Ages, and even then it seems to have more affinities to Josephus *Antiquities* 12 than to *Aristeas*.[29] The most obvious source of this tradition would have been Christians, among whom the Aristeas legend was well known,[30] but this makes it all the more astonishing that it has been domesticated within rabbinic tradition, because the Aristeas legend was theologically important for Christians, in that it gave them protection against the Jewish claim that they were using a faulty translation of Scripture. The fact that some rabbinic authorities were relaxed about accepting the legend must be due, in part, to their actual ignorance of the Septuagint, and, in part, to the fact that they are using it here in the context of an inner-Jewish halakhic debate on the status of translations. I am not so sure that in debate with Christians they would have been happy to have sanctioned every rendering of the Septuagint as the outcome of divine 'counsel'.

And it is equally clear that some authorities took a much more negative view. According to one text the day the Torah was translated into Greek was 'as hard a day for Israel as the day when the Calf was made' (*Massekhet Soferim* 1.7). According to another, nature signalled its disapproval ('darkness came upon the world for three days': *Megillat Taᶜanit Batra*), in much

[28] See n. 22 above.

[29] See Veltri 1992. Perhaps the first clear evidence of *direct* knowledge of *Aristeas* among Jewish scholars is in Azariah de' Rossi's, *Me'or ᶜEinayim*, chap. 8 (ed. Cassel, 1: 136ff.). See Weinberg 1985.

[30] See Hengel and Deines 2002.

the same way as it had signalled its disapproval of Jonathan ben ᶜUzziel's Aramaic targum of the Prophets by an earthquake, though Jonathan had been able to defend himself (*b. Meg.* 3a). Some attempted to establish a day of fasting on the date when the Greek translation was supposedly made. The date was a bit flexible, but was most commonly associated with the 8th Tevet. The fast is no longer observed, but remains, so to speak, 'on the statute-book', and is alluded to in the liturgy for the fast of the 10th Tevet.[31]

A variety of reasons is given for this negative attitude towards the Greek version. One invokes the doctrine of the untranslatability of the Torah. Another stresses the dangers of revealing God's secrets to the world. The context here, as I have already hinted, is surely the Jewish–Christian controversy. Those who have carelessly rendered the mysteries of Torah into Greek have put Israel in an awkward position, because they have made plausible the supersessionist claims of the Christians. But all is not lost, because Israel still retains to herself the mysteries of the *oral* Torah: because these have not been translated into Greek, they remain a closed book to Christians, the exclusive property of the Jewish people, the identity marker of the true Israel.

4.2 The Greek translation of Aqilas the Proselyte

The other Greek translation known to the Rabbis was that associated with the name of Aqilas the Proselyte. This was unquestionably the Greek version known to Christians as Aquila. Again, this is assigned an impressive pedigree: according to one tradition it was done under the guidance of Aqiva, according to another under the guidance of Rabbis Eliezer and Joshua.[32] If it was perceived to have the sanction of any or all three of these great authorities, then it would surely have had to be deemed kosher.

The Aqilas the Proselyte traditions are more concrete than those regarding King Talmai and his Torah, but, while there seems little doubt that the Rabbis had some direct knowledge of Aquila's translation, the information they convey still remains very thin. The few details of Aquila's life (e.g., that he was a nephew of the emperor Hadrian, and that he came from Pontus) correspond to what we find in patristic sources, but I would hesitate to claim that this is independent corroboration of their veracity.[33]

[31] See Leiman 1983; Veltri 1991–2; Elizur 2007, 197–9.

[32] In Palestinian tradition Aqiva is Aquila's mentor (*Yerushalmi Qiddushin* 1, 59a), but in Babylonian it is Rabbis Eliezer and Joshua who mentor Onkelos/Aqilas.

[33] The tradition that Aquila/Onkelos was the nephew of the emperor Hadrian, or related to him in some way, widespread in Jewish sources, is extant in at least three versions: *Exod. Rab.* 30:12; *Tanḥ.*

Christians only knew of Aquila from Jews, so they are conceivably here simply repeating *Jewish* tradition, exactly the same tradition as we find reflected in rabbinic literature. There are quotations in Greek from Aquila's version in rabbinic texts, but they number just over a dozen, and the same examples come up again and again. I wonder whether they testify to an original list of interesting Aquilan readings which someone compiled. In other words, we have here the beginnings of the tradition of Greek glossing of the Hebrew Bible which was to reach its culmination in Byzantine and early medieval times in the manuscripts to which Nicholas de Lange and his team on the Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism project have drawn our attention.[34] They do not necessarily attest to free-standing and complete versions of the Greek Aquila circulating in the rabbinic milieu. That such versions existed seems beyond doubt, since, in contrast to Christian circles, where Aquila may have been known solely through the Hexapla, some Jews must surely have had complete, separate copies, but that these would have been readily available to the Rabbis is less obvious. What the Rabbis had, as I have suggested, was a little text which listed some of the more interesting translations of Aquila, which was of some use as a midrashic source. It should be seen in the context of the use within the Hebrew midrashic tradition of *leʿazim* to clarify the text of Scripture – a practice best known from Rashi's Bible commentaries, but which has a long history before his day. I think similar lists of Aquilan readings, drawn ultimately from the Hexapla, may have circulated among Christian scholars, and it was these, rather than full copies of Aquila, that are the source of the references to Aquila in much patristic Bible commentary.

Short though it is, the rabbinic list of Aqilas' translations is interesting on a number of counts. (1) It covers all three divisions of the Hebrew canon. (2) Many of the readings look like genuine Aquila, and have been accepted as such by Field.[35] Some are corroborated by Christian sources, but some contradict the Christian sources. In some cases this may be because the reading in the Christian sources has come to be wrongly

(Buber), *Mishpatim* 3; *Yal. Shimʿoni*, Psalms 888; *b. Giṭ.* 56b–57a; *b. ʾAbod. Zar.* 11a. That someone with the name of Aqilas had slaves, and presumably an estate, in Pontus emerges incidentally from Sifra *Behar* 1.1. It is an assumption that this is the same Aqilas as the proselyte who translated the Torah into Greek. On the Aquila traditions in rabbinic literature see: Friedmann 1896; Silverstone 1931; Veltri 2002; Veltri 2006.

[34] See the project's website 'The Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism' (online: www.gbbj.org). Further: de Lange 1996a; de Lange 2007a; de Lange, Tchernetska and Olszowy-Schlanger 2007. Julia Krivoruchko is preparing an edition of the important Hebrew–Greek glossary to the Prophets Evr. IIA 1980.

[35] Field 1875.

assigned to Aquila, when in fact it is Symmachus or Theodotion. In others we should not rule out the possibility that the Aquila text was not static in Jewish circles, but was revised again and again as it continued in active use within Greek-speaking Jewish synagogues. (3) The transliterations of the Greek into Hebrew script have become horribly mangled in the manuscripts, because the medieval copyists did not know Greek, and this is why it is simply misguided, as some do, to stick too close to the *ductus litterarum* when reconstructing the Greek. Nevertheless enough survives intact to suggest that the transcriptions are fundamentally phonetic, that is, they register how the words were *pronounced*, not how they were spelled, which suggests the information was originally conveyed orally. There is much material available which allows us to compare these transcriptions with other transcriptions of Greek into Hebrew from late antiquity and the early Middle Ages.

5 The Rabbis, the Greek Bible and Hellenism

What light, if any, does all this throw on the vexed question of the Rabbis and Hellenism? It certainly throws a sidelight on the Rabbis' knowledge of Greek. The evidence is pretty conclusive that, though the Rabbis knew of Greek versions of the Bible, they did not themselves use them, and this was probably not just because they could read the original Hebrew, but also because they did not know enough Greek. They operated basically in an Aramaic-speaking milieu. They know and quote the Aramaic targums, which may have formed a significant source for some of their midrashim, such as Genesis Rabbah. There is no reason to think they would have been averse to using the Greek versions in the same way, if they had found their translations interesting. Indeed, as we saw, some accorded almost inspired status to the Torah of King Talmai, and they acknowledged Aquila as a rabbinically sponsored Greek version. Titbits of Greek translation were current in their circles and constantly recycled in midrashic contexts, but they are very meagre and slightly garbled. The reason they are not as numerous or substantial as the quotations from the Aramaic targum is surely linguistic: it was not so much that they objected to Greek per se, or to translation per se. It was because they did not know enough Greek. But this lack of knowledge of Greek, which is confirmed by other evidence, would have severely limited their interaction with Greek culture, particularly in its higher manifestations.

The rabbinic attitudes towards Greek versions of the Torah seem to mirror their attitudes towards Hellenism in general. There is no consistency.

However, what we have seen, at least with regard to Greek Bible translations, is a growing negativity. The ultra-liberal position, which implicitly accorded to Greek Torah scrolls the status of *Kitvei Qodesh*, seems to have been very early, probably first century CE, if not earlier. I wonder if it may not be linked in some way with the *kaige* translation movement. This was probably Palestinian in origin and may have been associated with or supported by the Pharisaic-rabbinic movement.[36] Certainly the first clear example of a *rabbinically* sponsored Greek version, Aquila, can be seen as an *über-kaige* recension. While the *kaige* project implies a critique of the old Greek versions, it does not reject translation per se. On the contrary, implicit in it is a belief that the Torah *can* be done into Greek, and within the *kaige* circles it is perfectly conceivable that a Torah translation into Greek, if done according to proper principles, would have been regarded as having the same sanctity as the Torah in Hebrew. Be this as it may, the general trajectory of rabbinic attitudes towards Greek versions is one of growing negativity, and the reason for this is clear. It has to do with the growing struggle with an emergent Christianity which validated its theological claims from the Greek Bible. For polemical reasons, the primacy of the Hebrew comes to be massively stressed in rabbinic circles, to the extent that some seemed prepared to argue that the Word of God was untranslatable: it could be found only in the graphic form of the *Hebrew* text. This illustrates an important point about the Rabbis and Hellenism which can be easily missed, namely that the relationship was deeply affected by the rise of Christianity. Hellenism increasingly presented itself to the Rabbis with a Christian face, and the general effect of this was to reinforce the camp of the naysayers.

But the more liberal attitudes were never, it seems, entirely lost. There is evidence, indirect but nonetheless compelling, that the rabbinic movement in Palestine made some efforts to extend its mission and influence into the Greek-speaking diaspora in the west, as well as towards the Aramaic-speaking Jewish communities in the east. As we noted, they sponsored the Greek version of Aquila, and possibly also, around a century later, the freer Greek rendering of Symmachus,[37] who may, perhaps, have been the *meturgeman* of the Greek-speaking synagogue in Caesarea Maritima, the Palestinian rabbinic movement's 'window' on the Greek west. And by the early Middle

[36] See Alexander 2009, in which I argue, speculatively, but I would suggest not implausibly, that the *kaige* translation of Lamentations was produced after 70 under rabbinic auspices to counter some of the theologies of catastrophe that were in vogue then.

[37] This, I would argue, is a reasonable conclusion that can be drawn from Alison Salvesen's work on Symmachus. See Salvesen 1991 and 2000.

Ages, many Greek-speaking communities in the west seem to have been rabbinized, and to be consulting the Tanakh in Hebrew, while still retaining a knowledge of Aquila and other Greek versions, and using Greek to gloss the original – a hidden Jewish world in which Hellenism and Hebraism seem to sit rather comfortably side by side, a world which Nicholas de Lange, more than anyone else in recent years, has opened up to scholarly contemplation.

CHAPTER 16

Greek–Hebrew linguistic contacts in late antique and medieval magical texts

Gideon Bohak

The frequent contacts between the Hebrew and the Greek languages, over a period of more than two and a half millennia, have been the subject of numerous studies, including many excellent contributions by the honorand of the present volume.[1] But the Jewish, 'pagan', and Christian magical texts of late antiquity and the Middle Ages have rarely been utilized in the study of such linguistic contacts, in spite of their potential contribution to this field, in which the available sources tend to be quite inadequate. It is therefore with this lacuna in mind that I wish to honour Nicholas de Lange by analysing the most important magical texts that shed light on the issue that is so dear to his heart, and is of such major significance for the *longue durée* study of Judaeo-Greek culture. In what follows, I focus on four specific types of linguistic contacts, arranged in a chronological order.[2] I begin with some Greek transliterations of Hebrew phrases and biblical verses, as found first in Jewish and then in some Graeco-Egyptian magical texts. I then turn to bilingual (Aramaic/Greek or Hebrew/Greek) and even trilingual (Aramaic/Greek/Hebrew) magical texts, in which each language is written in its own alphabet. I then turn, in the third section, to several examples of the transliteration of Greek phrases in Hebrew letters in Jewish magical texts of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. And finally I return to the Greek transliteration of Hebrew words and sentences, but this time in late Byzantine and post-Byzantine Christian manuscripts.[3]

I am grateful to Ortal-Paz Saar and Bill Rebiger for their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

[1] See, for example, de Lange 1995a, 1996a, 1998 (esp. 138–9), 2006, 2007b and 2007c.

[2] I have dealt with the first three topics in Bohak 2008, but the following discussion incorporates texts and objects of which I was not aware at the time, or that were published after the book went to press.

[3] Related topics, which will require a separate study, include the occurrence of translations of magical recipes and formulae from Aramaic and Hebrew into Greek or vice versa (for which see Bohak 2008, 235–8), the many Greek loanwords found in the Hebrew and Aramaic magical texts of late

Greek transliterations of Hebrew liturgical formulae

The two earliest Jewish amulets currently known to us were found in Ketef Hinnom, in Jerusalem, and date to the seventh, sixth, or even fifth century BCE. They are written in the 'Palaeo-Hebrew' script on thin sheets of silver, and contain the text of the Priestly Blessing (known to us from Num. 6:24–6) and some additional texts.[4] However, the next Jewish amulets known to us date from almost a millennium later, from the second and third centuries CE. Thus, while we might think of a continuity from the First Temple period amulets to those of the High Roman Empire, such a continuity seems unlikely.[5] In fact, it seems as if Jews had almost forgotten the practice of writing biblical verses and apotropaic texts on thin sheets of metal, re-adopting it in the Roman period in the light of the common Greek recourse to such amulets.[6] It is thus interesting to note that the two earliest late antique Jewish amulets that we possess, though stemming from two remote corners of the Roman Empire, share a unique feature in common, namely the transliteration in Greek letters of long phrases in Hebrew.

The first of these amulets has been known for almost two centuries. It was found in 1827 in Caernarvon (the Roman fort of Segontium, in Wales), probably in a grave, and was dated by its latest editor to the late first or early second century CE (but it probably dates to later in the second century).[7] Its text, which is engraved on a gold *lamella*, includes a strange mixture of Hebrew liturgical phrases transliterated in Greek letters, meaningless *voces magicae*, some magic signs (*charaktêres*), and at least one Greek phrase, 'protect me, Alfianus', which probably refers to the amulet's owner.[8] The reconstruction of the transliterated Hebrew phrases is not easy, but phrases such as *eie esar eie* (i.e. אהיה אשר אהיה, the 'I-am-who-I-am' formula of Exod. 3:14), or *elliôn annôra aggibbôr* (i.e. עליון הנורא הגיבור,

antiquity, including some that are unattested in rabbinic literature (see Bohak 2008, 238–41, for some examples), the wider impact of the Greek language upon the language of some of the Hebrew and Aramaic magical texts of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, and the impact of Hebrew and Aramaic on the Greek used in some of the Jewish magical texts.

4 For the Ketef Hinnom amulets, see Yardeni 1991; Barkay 1992; Barkay *et al.* 2004; and cf. Ne'eman 2011, with further bibliography.

5 For a different view, see Eshel and Leiman 2010, 197.

6 For the Greek amulets, see esp. Kotansky 1994, and for their chronology, see ibid., xvii–xix. Many more amulets may be found in *Suppl. Mag.*

7 For the Caernarvon amulet see Kotansky 1994, No. 2 (3–12), and Veltri 1996, 34. For a detailed analysis of its contents, see Bohak 2003, 74–7.

8 This owner may have been a Jew, but this cannot be taken for granted, as the production of amulets by Jewish amulet-makers for non-Jewish clients is well attested elsewhere. See Lacerenza 2002 and Bohak 2008, 2, 148, 191, 373, 423.

'the Most High, the terrible, the mighty') provide a clear indication as to the nature of the Hebrew text that lurks behind the Greek transliteration, which probably was based on a set of Hebrew liturgical formulae that were commonly used by Jews at the time.[9]

The second amulet has been published recently, and is much easier to interpret. It was found in Halbturn, in Austria, in the grave of a small child (*c*. eighteen months old), and probably dates to the second half of the second century or the first half of the third century CE.[10] The text was inscribed on a gold *lamella*, which was then rolled into a silver tubular case. It consists of a Greek transliteration of the *Shema* prayer (Deut. 6:4), ΣΥΜΑ/ΙΣΤΡΑΗ/Λ ΑΔΩ/ΝΕ ΕΛΩ/Η ΑΔΩ/Ν Α.[11] Given the ubiquity of this formula in Jewish liturgy and in Jewish magical texts, its appearance on an amulet is unsurprising. But the fact that the amulet producer chose to write this verse in its original Hebrew wording, but in a Greek transliteration, is unexpected. This amulet thus joins the Caernarvon one in presenting Hebrew liturgical phrases transliterated in Greek letters and engraved on gold *lamellae* clearly serving as amulets. It also shares with the Caernarvon amulet a relatively early date, in the second or third centuries CE, which makes both amulets somewhat older than the Aramaic and Hebrew amulets currently known to us, to which we shall turn below. The fact that these two amulets were found in two very distant locations argues for the wider use of such amulets among diaspora Jews, and more such amulets are likely to be found in the future.

The obvious similarity between these two early Jewish amulets might be more than a mere coincidence, for it seems to show that, like many other cultural innovations (such as the translation of Biblical texts into Greek, or the establishment of synagogues), the Greek practice of writing amuletic texts on thin sheets of metal was first adopted by the Jews of the diaspora, and became popular in Palestine only at a later stage. It might even show that when the Jews of the diaspora adopted this practice from their non-Jewish neighbours, they were not yet sure what exactly they should write upon the metal *lamellae*, and one recurrent solution was to take biblical verses and Hebrew liturgical formulae, but to write them in Greek letters. This peculiar choice was due either to a lack of familiarity with the

[9] I now think that the word that follows *aggibôr*, that was read by Kotansky 1994, 4, as βαιλλα/λααμωθ (lines 9–10) should be read βαιμα/λααμωθ (i.e., read Μ rather than ΛΛ), i.e., במלחמות ('the mighty one in wars'). For similar phrases in the Hebrew Bible, see Ps. 24:8, Isa. 42:13.

[10] For the *editio princeps*, see Eshel, Eshel and Lange 2010; the subsequent fascicle of the *Journal of Ancient Judaism* was entirely devoted to this amulet (under the title *Golden Words: An Ancient Jewish Amulet from Austria and the Jewish Presence in Roman Panonia*).

[11] For a linguistic analysis of this transliteration of the Hebrew verse, see Bar-Asher 2010.

Hebrew alphabet, or to some lingering feeling that it was more appropriate to write such texts in Greek letters, just like the non-Jewish amulets.[12] It may even reflect a wider diaspora Jewish recourse to Hebrew sacred texts in Greek transliterations.[13] While the clarification of these issues will only become possible when more such amulets are found and studied, it already seems likely that the amulets with transliterated Hebrew phrases were subsequently replaced by others, for we now have many more Jewish amulets from late antiquity, mostly written on thin sheets of metal and mostly dating from the fourth to the seventh centuries, and these amulets are invariably written in Aramaic and/or Hebrew, and sometimes also in Greek (as we shall see in the following section), but they do not contain any Greek transliterations of Hebrew phrases.[14] Apparently, when the Hebrew- and Aramaic-speaking Jews of Palestine and elsewhere adopted the practice of writing amulets on thin sheets of metal, their amulets soon drove the transliterated-Hebrew amulets out of the market, and became the norm, even in the diaspora. In fact, even when we find some Greek-language Jewish amulets with some transliterations of Hebrew and Aramaic words, these tend to be isolated words and technical terms, and not fully fledged Hebrew phrases and sentences.[15] This probably means that the Greek-speaking Jews dropped the practice of transliteration and opted for more 'standard' Greek amulets.

Before leaving these two amulets, one more note may be added, about the appearance of transliterated Hebrew words and phrases in some of the Graeco-Egyptian magical papyri. Here, in Greek recipe-books that clearly were copied and used by 'pagan' practitioners, we find not only Hebrew words such as Sabaôth, Adônai, and Elôai, but even some transliterated Hebrew phrases, such as βαρουχ Ἀδωναΐ, Ἐλωαὶ Ἀβραάμ, 'Blessed is the Lord, the god of Abraham' (PGM V: 480–1).[16] Such names and phrases may have reached the non-Jewish magicians through oral transmission from their Jewish colleagues, or even from Jews who had no specific interest in magic. However, we should consider the possibility that these

[12] We might even consider the possibility that the actual engraving on the thin sheets of metal was done by non-Jewish amulet-makers, who only knew the Greek alphabet.

[13] Thus these amulets might even shed some light on the much debated issue of the origins of the second column of Origen's *Hexapla*, for which see de Lange 1976, 57–8.

[14] For detailed surveys of the evidence, and further bibliographies, see Bohak 2008, 149–53; Harari 2010, 167–79; Leiman 2010; Eshel and Leiman 2010.

[15] See Kotansky 1994, No. 33 (155–66; third or fourth century), with further discussions in Veltri 1996, 35–7 and Lacerenza 1998, 294–300; for another example, see the Greek transliteration of the *atbash* sequence (*et bos gar dak*, etc.) on the magical gem published by Keil 1940 and republished in Ameling 2004 (Magica1, 549–51), and in Spier 2007, No. 961.

[16] For the Hebrew elements in these texts, much exaggerated by earlier scholarship, see Bohak 2003.

magicians had access to such Hebrew formulae in Greek transliterations, not much different from those found on the Caernarvon and Halbturn amulets.[17] Once again, only the discovery of more such objects would tell us how popular this practice was, and for how long it remained in vogue.

Bilingual and trilingual Jewish magical texts

Thus far we have focused on amulets dating from the first to the third centuries CE. Moving to a later period, probably the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries CE, we find a new type of Hebrew–Greek mixture, in several bilingual (Aramaic/Greek or Hebrew/Greek) and trilingual (Aramaic/Greek/Hebrew) amulets. The earliest of these is a copper amulet found near Kibbutz Evron, in western Galilee, and dated by its editor either to the fourth or fifth or to the third or fourth centuries CE.[18] It displays five lines of Hebrew text (consisting mostly of divine names) followed by a Greek text in eleven lines consisting of praises of God and a plea for health and salvation for the amulet's owner. From the text's layout one cannot tell whether the two scripts were written by the same person, but both parts of the text are very 'Jewish' in their monotheistic piety, and the Greek text displays many Semitisms; thus, both parts were written either by a bilingual Jewish scribe or by two Jewish scribes working in close cooperation.[19] Another bilingual amulet, in the Moussaieff collection, displays close parallels between its Greek text and that of the Evron amulet. Unfortunately, this amulet remains unpublished.[20]

A more intriguing case of multilingualism is presented by two amulets that are said to have been found in two very different places, but seem to have been produced by a single amulet-maker, or within the same workshop. The first of these is the well-known trilingual (Aramaic/Greek/Hebrew) silver amulet from the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, apparently found in Tell el-Amarna in Egypt and probably dating to the fifth century CE.[21] It displays what is by far the longest and most complex text

[17] I note, for example, that one of the Greek magical texts from the 'multilingual workshop' (see below, n. 30) has the expression *baroch sêmo*, i.e., ברוך שמו, 'blessed is His Name'. Unfortunately, the fragment is in a poor state of preservation (PGM CXXXV = *Suppl. Mag.* II, No. 98, 266).

[18] See Kotansky 1991, where he offers a late fourth- or fifth-century date, and Kotansky 1994, no. 56 (312–25), positing the third–fourth century.

[19] For the possible presence of a Chi-Rho monogram on this amulet, see Bohak 2008, 277.

[20] For information about its contents, I thank David Jordan and Dan Levene.

[21] See Kotansky, Naveh and Shaked 1992, who suggest, p. 7, that the date is 'probably fifth century AD'. For a fuller discussion of this amulet, see Bohak 2008, 232–5 and 301–2, where I was still unaware of the existence of a parallel amulet.

on an ancient Jewish amulet published thus far, and is fully trilingual in contents and layout. It begins with a Greek section, which consists mostly of 'magic words' and vowel-triangles, and moves to a long anti-demonic adjuration in Aramaic that clearly was inscribed after the Greek text had already been written. Within this Aramaic text are embedded several different sections in Hebrew, including many biblical verses and a short anti-demonic psalm attributed to David, who supposedly recited it while exorcizing the evil spirit of King Saul.[22] Following this Aramaic and Hebrew text, there are more lines of Greek text, including some 'magical words', a claim that the amulet is written 'in Hebrew' (*aibraïsti*), and several short adjurations. In one of these, we find the peculiar Greek-Hebrew reference to 'Abrasax, Miochaêl [*sic*], Gabriêl, Kyrie *en n* כרובים,' which apparently means 'Abrasax, Michael, Gabriel, the Lord, (who sits?) among the Cherubim', and in another we find the name שלמה, Solomon, embedded within a Greek text, which remains undeciphered.[23] Such 'macaroni' sentences make it likely that the whole amulet, including both the Greek and the Aramaic and Hebrew sections, was written by a single, trilingual scribe. That he was copying his text from a written book of magical recipes seems likely not only from the length and complexity of the text itself, but also from the fact that both the Greek and the Aramaic sections of the text contain instructions that seem to have been mistakenly copied from the recipe(s) where they appeared.[24]

The second amulet is far less well known, and has never been published in its entirety.[25] It was probably found on the Esquiline Hill in Rome in the years 1874–8, and was dated by its editors to the fifth century CE. It is in a bad state of preservation, but one can note that, like the amulet from the Ashmolean Museum, it is written on a silver *lamella*, and in a mixture of Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew. Moreover, the preserved Greek text bears a close resemblance to that of the Ashmolean amulet, and – what is even more striking – the series of magic signs

[22] For this and related apocryphal exorcistic psalms, see Bohak 2013.

[23] See Kotansky, Naveh and Shaked 1992, 10, lines 34 (where they read *kyrie en* כרוביל) and 36. The letter *nu* before the Hebrew word might be a dittography of the final letter of the previous word; if the text came from Egypt, it might reflect the influence of Coptic, where an initial N- marks the plural form, but this is unlikely.

[24] See Kotansky, Naveh and Shaked 1992, line 20: לאשה וערויתה דכל יום תקיפה כתוב בפיטק, i.e., 'for a fever and shivering that intensifies daily, write on a small slip of papyrus/parchment' (and note the use of a Greek loanword, *pittakion*); line 32: εἰ δυνατ[ὸ]ν ἐν βυσσίνω (magic signs) εἰ δὲ ἐν ράχκω λίνω (magic signs), i.e., 'if possible (write) (these magic signs) on fine linen, but if (not), (write) (these magical signs) on a strip of linen.'

[25] For partial publications and discussions, see Amadasi and Bevilacqua 2004; Moriggi 2006a and 2006b.

(*charaktêres*) in both amulets is virtually identical.[26] Thus, while the square script letter-forms of the two amulets seem to differ from each other, it is likely that the two amulets were produced from the same recipe book, probably by two different scribes working in close cooperation.[27] Whether they were produced in Egypt, in Rome or in a third location cannot be known, but the survival of two similar specimens might show that the multilingual amulets produced by this workshop were popular around the fifth century CE.

The mixture of Aramaic and Hebrew written in square script with Greek written in Greek letters is not unique to these four amulets. Another amulet, of unknown provenance, is written in Hebrew but contains several well-known 'magical words' written in the Greek alphabet, either because the copyist thought that they might lose their magical potency if written in another language, or because he was faithfully copying his spell from a bilingual or trilingual magical recipe book.[28] Traces of this kind of bilingualism may also be found in other Jewish magical texts, including one or more bilingual (Greek/Hebrew) magical gems of late antique origins.[29] Even more intriguing are the remnants of a trilingual or quadrilingual (Coptic/Greek/Aramaic/Hebrew) and multicultural (Christian/Jewish) magical workshop in fifth- or early sixth-century Egypt, whose Aramaic and Hebrew fragments are in a poor state of preservation, but at least two of which have Aramaic texts on one side, Greek on the other.[30] That some such texts were being copied in the Middle East long after the Muslim conquest might be suggested by an unpublished Genizah fragment on which a magical text in Aramaic and Hebrew is accompanied by *charaktêres* and Greek words written in uncial letters.[31]

These disparate pieces of evidence, to which more items are likely to be added in the future, make it clear that among the Jewish magicians of late antiquity quite a few were bilingual and trilingual, and could produce elaborate texts in Aramaic and Hebrew in the square Hebrew script, and

[26] I owe this last observation to my student, Nirit Ben-Shemol.

[27] Such cases, of different producers (a master and his disciples or assistants?) working from the same prototype, are well known in the ancient world; see, for example, Jordan 1985.

[28] Naveh and Shaked 1985, Amulet 14 (101–4).

[29] See Keil 1940; for other examples, see Spier 2007, 113 n. 22 (= *CIJ* II, 874; *IJudO* III, Syr27), and No. 962, and cf. Nos. 960 and 654 (= *CIJ* II, 875; *IJudO* III, Syr20).

[30] The fragments in this dossier were published in *SCO* 29 (1979), 15–130; the Coptic fragments have since been re-edited in Pernigotti 1993; the Greek fragments have been re-edited as *Suppl. Mag.* II, Nos. 96–8 (231–68) and translated in Betz 1986, Nos. CXXIII–CXXV (318–22). The Aramaic and Hebrew fragments (published in Marrassini 1979) have not been re-edited.

[31] The fragment is Cambridge, T-S NS 329.972, and is part of a larger booklet whose other fragments I am currently trying to identify.

in Greek in the Greek alphabet.[32] Moreover, some of them could produce such multilingual texts on a single writing surface, requiring a shift in direction of the writing from right–left to left–right and back while scratching tiny letters on a silver *lamella*. The existence of such multilingual Jews in antiquity is well known from other sources, be it the grandson of Jesus ben Sira who could translate his grandfather's work from Hebrew to Greek in the late second century BCE, the historian Josephus who could write in Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek in the second half of the first century CE, Origen's Jewish interlocutors in the third century CE, or the early fourth-century Rabbi Abbahu of Caesarea, whose Greek puns are recorded in the Palestinian Talmud. And yet, in studies of such bilingual and multilingual Jews, the magical texts are rarely mentioned, in spite of their potential contribution to the demonstration of a widespread multilingualism among late antique Jews. Moreover, we shall see more examples of such multilingualism in the next section of our study.[33]

Hebrew transliterations of Greek phrases

From the placing of Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek texts side-by-side on the same amulets, while using each language's native writing system, we move to a related phenomenon, namely, the incorporation of Greek phrases, transliterated in the square Hebrew script, within Hebrew and Aramaic magical texts of late antiquity. This phenomenon is best exemplified by the celebrated prayer to Helios which is found in *Sepher ha-Razim* (on which see below), but it is also attested in several other Jewish magical texts of late antiquity. However, before offering a short survey of all the evidence, let me note the basic problem that underlies them all, namely, that the vowel-less Hebrew alphabet is entirely unsuited to the transliteration of Greek words.[34] Thus, whereas the Greek transliterations of Hebrew phrases often enable the reconstruction of the original Hebrew – as we saw above, and as we shall see again below – the reconstruction of Greek phrases from their Hebrew transliterations is a risky business.[35] Thus, instead of offering such reconstructions and trying to defend their plausibility, I shall list all of the relevant cases currently known to me.

[32] Such bilingualism is very common in non-Jewish magical texts; see, for example, Tomlin 2004; Dieleman 2005. Many more examples could be adduced.

[33] See, most recently, Fraade 2012, esp. 19* n. 47.

[34] In later periods, this problem was partly solved by the vocalization of all the transliterated Greek words, as may be seen from virtually every text in de Lange 1996a. Such a solution was unavailable to late antique magicians, who lived prior to the development of the Hebrew vocalization system.

[35] See further Bohak 2001.

The most famous example of a Hebrew transliteration of a Greek sentence in a Jewish magical text is also the most problematic one. It is found in *Sepher ha-Razim*, 'The Book of Mysteries', a well-structured Hebrew book of magic that is likely to stem from late antique Palestine.[36] The book consists of a list of the seven heavens and their many subdivisions, the angels that reside in each, and the aims for which these angels may be recruited, coupled with detailed ritual instructions for recruiting them. In the fourth heaven, we find a long ritual intended to enable one to talk to the Sun (in order to learn various secrets, since the Sun sees everything), a ritual that culminates in the magician prostrating himself on the ground and reciting a long Greek prayer to Helios, which is transliterated in Hebrew letters.[37] Why the ancient editors of this text chose to transmit the prayer in this form is not really clear: Margalioth, the text's first editor, suggested that it was simply copied verbatim, but in the Hebrew alphabet, from some Graeco-Egyptian book of magic, and this is possible. But one could suggest that the ancient Jewish editors of *Sepher ha-Razim* thought that Helios is better addressed in Greek, or that because such a prayer might prove problematic for the book's intended users and their monotheistic sensitivities, it is better to leave the prayer untranslated. Moreover, it is even possible that the earliest copies of *Sepher ha-Razim* transmitted this prayer in Greek letters (making it akin to the bilingual magical texts we have already surveyed), and that only at a later stage, when Greek was no longer in extensive use among Jews, was it transliterated in Hebrew letters.[38] What seems clear, however, is that once they were copied in Hebrew letters, the Greek words soon became meaningless, and that the textual witnesses currently at our disposal allow for no certain reconstruction of the original Greek prayer.

[36] For *Sepher ha-Razim*, see Margalioth 1966; Rebiger and Schäfer 2009. For the book's date, see Margalioth 1966, 23–9 (third century), and Rebiger and Schäfer 2009, II: 3–9 (seventh–eighth century). For the absence of Muslim/Arabic influences, and a likely date between the fourth and the seventh centuries, see Bohak 2008, 173–4.

[37] For the text, see Margalioth 1966, 99, with his discussion of the prayer (12–13), and Rebiger and Schäfer 2009, I: 74*–5* (§ 213), with their discussion in II: 255–9. For further analysis, see Sznol 1989. The importance of this transliterated Greek prayer had been noted by Gershom Scholem as early as 1929. See Bohak 2012, 148 and 161.

[38] The same applies to a second, and much shorter, transliterated Greek phrase in *Sepher ha-Razim*, which is intended to dismiss a river- or sea-god that had been summoned, and is found in Margalioth 1966, 80, and in Rebiger and Schäfer 2009, I: 36*–7* (§ 113). See their discussion in vol. II: 232. Since this section is attested in the Judaeo-Arabic version of *Sepher ha-Razim* in the Cairo Genizah (Oxford, Bodleian Heb. f.45.1–18 = G22 in Rebiger and Schäfer 2009), the absence from that version of the longer Greek prayer is likely to be due solely to that version's partial preservation (*pace* Rebiger and Schäfer 2009, II: 255).

From this famous example, we move to another well-known one, found in *Harba de-Moshe*, 'The Sword of Moses', an Aramaic magical text whose transmission history is likely to have been long and complicated.[39] It is divided into three main parts – a long introduction, a magical 'sword' which consists of a long string of 'magical words', and a set of about 140 recipes, each of which utilizes a different section of the 'sword' by reciting or inscribing it as a part of the magical procedure. In the 'sword' section, one finds numerous *voces magicae* that are well known from the Greek magical papyri, such as Ablanathanalba, Akrammachamarei, and Sesengen Bar Pharanges. One also finds a sequence of Greek words transliterated in Hebrew letters, and – strangest of all – an Aramaic sentence that seems to be a translation of the transliterated Greek words, but embedded into the meaningless 'sword'.[40] The inclusion of both transliteration and translation, and in two unrelated sections of the same 'sword', could hardly have been an intentional editorial decision, and is likely to be the result of careless composition and/or transmission. But the very fact that this text preserves complex Greek phrases in Hebrew transliteration shows that such textual materials were available to its editors, while the fact that it preserves an accurate Aramaic translation proves that some ancient Jews still knew that these were Greek phrases, and knew what the Greek words meant. Luckily, we too now know what the transliterated Greek once said, which is why this is the only example of a Greek magical formula transliterated in Hebrew letters whose original Greek wording may be reconstructed with some certainty.

In addition to these two major examples, a few minor ones may be added. In one magical rotulus (vertical scroll) from the Cairo Genizah we find a long set of aggressive magical recipes, including one whose spell consists of three or four transliterated Greek words, תיאון פנ?יומה קטיגורוס, i.e., θεῶν φαίνομαι κατήγορος, 'I appear as an opponent of the gods', or some similar expression.[41] In a magical text from the Cairo Genizah we find several incomprehensible 'magical words' (some of which are garbled Greek), followed by a long sequence of טון אברהם טון יצחק טון יעקב, etc., all of which is likely to be a Hebrew transliteration of a Greek sentence referring to the Patriarchs and other biblical figures.[42] And in many other

[39] For the *Sword of Moses*, see Harari 1997; Harari 2012.

[40] This was first pointed out by Rohrbacher-Sticker 1996, and cf. Bohak 2008, 179 nn. 92–3. The relevant passages are in Harari 1997, 27, 36, 140–1.

[41] For a fuller discussion, see Bohak 2011, 329–31.

[42] See Schäfer and Shaked 1994–9, III: No. 61 1b/1–7 (68), with the editors' notes *ad loc*.

Genizah magical texts, one senses the possible presence of transliterated Greek phrases, whose exact reconstruction still eludes us.[43]

Later Greek transliterations of Hebrew phrases and biblical verses

Thus far, we have focused mostly on Jewish magical texts that are demonstrably or probably of late antique origin. But the magical contacts between Hebrew and Greek did not end after the Muslim conquest of the Middle East and the gradual emergence of Arabic as the Jews' main literary and vernacular language. They were particularly strong in the shrinking Byzantine Empire, whose Jewish communities' magical texts and practices have yet to receive proper attention. Moreover, they are evident even in Christian Byzantine magical texts, yet another topic that has only received sporadic attention.[44] Thus, some late Byzantine magical texts bear clear (but often not noted!) testimony to the ongoing Christian infatuation with Jewish magic and with the Hebrew language.[45] A full survey of this phenomenon is out of the question here, especially as most of the relevant manuscripts of Byzantine Greek magic have yet to be catalogued, edited and analysed, but a close analysis of one specific example should encourage other scholars to look for more such evidence.[46]

The text analysed below is a set of *voces magicae* found in three late Byzantine and post-Byzantine manuscripts edited by Delatte and Torijano, neither of whom was aware of the Hebrew origins of these 'magical words'.[47] In all three cases, the seemingly meaningless 'magical words' are to be inscribed by the magician on a piece of leather, which he should wear around his chest as an amulet, while performing an elaborate demon-summoning ritual. To facilitate the synoptic examination of all three manuscripts, I have labelled them A, B and C, and divided the text into three sections, even though the original sequence displays no awareness of any such division.[48] For each phrase, I adduce the three Greek

[43] For a related issue, namely, the appearance of some Byzantine Christian motifs, and the mistranslation of Greek words, in Jewish magical texts from the Cairo Genizah, see Leicht 2003.

[44] See Greenfield 1988, and studies in Petropoulos 2008.

[45] This infatuation is evident in Christian Latin and vernacular magical texts, and see, for example, Heim 1892, 528; Véronèse 2010, 32 n. 14.

[46] For other possible examples, see Preisendanz 1922; Delatte 1954, 89–94 and elsewhere (I am grateful to Reimund Leicht for this reference); Kotansky 1994, 8.

[47] The presence of Hebrew phrases behind these Greek 'words' was independently noted by Reimund Leicht.

[48] A = London, British Library, MS Harleianus 5596 (fifteenth century), fol. 31, edited by Delatte 1927, 425, and re-edited by Torijano 2002, 300. B = Athens, Gennadios Library, MS No. 45

transliterations, the postulated Hebrew equivalent, an English translation, and a brief commentary.

(A) ελ ραχαχου βαχανου ιρρεχ αμπαιμ ραββες εεμεθ (B) ελ αχαχαχου βαχανου ιρρρεχ παιν βαρβεε εεμεθ (C) ελρα αγλου βαχανου ηροχ ας πανεν ραβες εγμεθ	אל רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב אמת	A merciful and compassionate God, slow of anger and very truthful

The Hebrew sequence behind the Greek transliteration is easy enough to decipher, and contains a well-known biblical formula, found in Exod. 34:6 and in Ps. 86:15, with the word חסד omitted or elided between the words ורב and ואמת.

(A) ελωχχιμι λαχαστριλεν αδωναι λεεραα θιουσα (B) ελοχαχαμ τζηλενι αδωναι λεες ρααθ ιουσα (C) ελοχημ λαχα τζελενη… αδοναγι λες γες ραουθαα	אלהים לך תפילה? אדוני? לעת רצון	God, to you is the prayer, Lord, ? in the time of acceptance?

This section is a bit more problematic, but seems to consist of a Greek transliteration of Ps. 69:14, though somewhat garbled (the original verse is ואני תפלתי לך יהוה עת רצון אלוהים).

(A) γιακουμ ελοληνσου μισαναaδ μιμπαγιαδ (B) γιναουμ ελοχιμ γιαφουτζου οιβεχα ογεεβαδ βιαγιανουσα μισαναδ μιπαγαδα (C) ηακπου λοχιμ ηαρουτζου αβεχαν ογεβαδ βηγενους μησα ναηχ	יקום אלהים יפוצו אויביך אויביו וינוסו משנאיו מפניו	God shall rise your enemies his enemies shall disperse and his haters shall flee before him

(sixteenth century), edited by Delatte 1959, 300. C = Athens, Historical and Ethnographic Society, MS No. 115 (early eighteenth century), fol. 17, edited by Delatte 1927, 18. The text is a part of the so-called *Epistle of Rehoboam* or *Hygromanteia of Solomon*, for which see Caroll 1989; Torijano 2002, 151–75, 209–24; and esp. Leicht 2006, 343.

The third section clearly is a Greek transliteration of Ps. 68:2. The apparent correction of אויביך to אויביו, if this is what it really is, might imply that whoever wrote this text down was listening to someone who read the Hebrew, made a mistake (confusing the verse with Num. 10:35), and corrected the word he had mispronounced. The hearer unwittingly transliterated the entire sequence, without fully understanding what had happened. Thus, it seems likely that some Greek-speaking Christian magician was eavesdropping on his Jewish neighbours while they recited their prayers, and copied this powerful string of *voces magicae*, but another suggestion is that he received this sequence from a Jewish colleague, and that it was further garbled in the process of transmission.

Looking at all three biblical verses together, we note that Num. 10:35, Exod. 34:6/Ps. 86:15 and Ps. 69:14 often appear together in the morning prayers for the Sabbath and the Holidays, at that point in the service when the Torah scroll is taken out of the Ark. Why this sequence would be deemed useful in a Christian Greek ritual for summoning demons is less obvious, and it is possible that these verses were found side-by-side in some Jewish magical texts also. An answer to such a question will only emerge once all the other transliterated Hebrew phrases in these Greek magical texts are identified and analysed in greater detail, and Byzantine Jewish magic is studied in greater depth.

Conclusion

We began with Jewish amulets of the second and third centuries CE, and ended with Christian Greek manuscripts of the fifteenth, sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, and saw several different types of encounters between Hebrew (and, more rarely, Aramaic) and Greek, including both bilingual and trilingual texts and texts which use one writing system to transliterate phrases in the other language. All these processes are familiar from other types of sources, too, and in that sense one may argue that the magical texts do not teach us anything of which we were utterly oblivious before. And yet, the addition of the magical texts to the other (often painfully scarce!) sources at our disposal, and their inclusion in wider surveys of Judaeo-Greek cultural contacts in late antiquity and the Middle Ages, remain a desideratum. As we noted throughout the present study, these texts have much to tell us about many 'non-magical' issues, including the use of the Hebrew Bible among the Jews of the diaspora in the Roman Empire, and the transliteration of biblical verses in Greek letters as practised by these Jews. They have even more to tell us about the widespread bilingualism

and trilingualism among Jews in late antiquity, and their ability to write Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew texts, sometimes on a small metal *lamella*. And these sources have much to tell us about intercommunal and intercultural contacts in all periods, be it Jewish–'pagan' and Jewish–Christian contacts in late antiquity, Jewish–Christian contacts in the Middle Ages, or Jewish–Christian contacts in the late Byzantine period. For students of ancient and medieval Jewish history and culture, the magical texts have the enormous advantage of being quite numerous, and of supplying a 'ground level' view of Judaism, often different from that supplied by the more canonical sources. For students of Judaeo-Greek culture, these texts have the additional advantage of providing 'ground level' access to the languages spoken and written by Jews, including frequent intersections between Hebrew and Greek. As such, they deserve closer study, and should be incorporated as far as possible into the wider history of Judaeo-Greek culture. If the present survey encourages such a study, it will have achieved its goal.

CHAPTER 17

Jewish and Christian hymnody in the early Byzantine period

Wout van Bekkum

Introduction

In his article for the *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, the honorand Nicholas de Lange has devoted an extensive article on the Jews in the age of the Byzantine emperor Justinian I (482–565), who ascended the imperial throne in 527 and ruled Byzantium until his death (de Lange 2005, 401–26). With its administrative, religious, and cultural centre in Constantinople, the Byzantine Empire in the Justinian era prospered and succeeded in maintaining and extending its authority across large parts of Asia, Asia Minor, North Africa, and Europe. Byzantium by then contained numerous ethnic and linguistic communities, and despite Justinian's attempts to impose religious unity under the aegis of the Church, many inner disputations, controversies and schisms remained. However, the Byzantine Church was powerful, and it expanded through the efforts of Justinian, whose conquests brought eastern and western Christianity within a single political and ecclesiastical structure. The leading representatives of the Church – bishops, monks and clerics – were very influential and attained important positions in Byzantine society. Besides Byzantine orthodoxy, Monophysitism, which emphasized the divinity of Christ, was a strong presence in countries like Egypt, Syria and Armenia. While orthodox Christians probably formed the majority of the empire's intelligentsia and teachers during the Justinian era, a scholarly pagan minority remained influential. In 529 Justinian promulgated an edict which forbade pagans to teach, rendering the long tradition of paganism and its classical literature practically extinct.

The same emperor also issued decrees against the Jewish minority living under his rule, but, aside from certain restrictions upon their social and civil rights, Jews were treated more leniently than were pagans and 'heretics' and were never officially proscribed. The most detailed legislation concerning the Jews can be found in Justinian's *Novella* no. 146, dated 8

February 553.[1] This and other imperial laws raise the question of how political and religious authorities officially related to the Jews of Byzantium in general and to Jewish society in particular, apart from what we learn about anti-Jewish polemics in the extensive *Adversus Iudaeos* literature. What do we actually know about Byzantine Jewry in the fifth and sixth centuries, particularly in the Justinian period? De Lange believes that reliable information about Byzantine Jews is scarce: 'A wealth of Jewish literature may have had a good chance to have existed in the sixth century, if not in its present form then in something like it, but it is hard to be certain in any particular case.' However, De Lange makes an exception for two types of writing, the midrash and the piyyut. Both genres reflect the inner life of Judaism and have close parallels in Christian writing, and indeed both may well have originated under Christian influence, but determining which one influenced the other or whether the influences were mutual is difficult.[2]

This contribution will focus on the piyyut, the hymnody or the liturgical poetry of the synagogue. The Hebrew term is thought to be derived from the Greek *poietes* or *poiesis*, a remarkable fact, although the employment of this originally non-Jewish terminology – (or non-Jewish names like Yannai(os) and Qillir) is not entirely indicative of the degree of Jewish acculturation in the late Roman-Byzantine period.[3] Nowhere else does the name Qillir occur as a personal name, and some scholars believe that 'Qillir' is either a derivation from the personal name Cyrillos or a derivation from the Greek noun *kleros* or *klerikos*, which means '(Christian) clergy'. Justinian employs this term in both his codex and novels. Qillir survived in Jewish tradition as a highly enigmatic composer whose festive poems became renowned in (predominantly Ashkenazic) synagogue liturgy until modern times. The hymnist Qillir as a person displays rather divergent styles of poetry. Could it therefore be possible that the name Qillir does not represent just one person but rather a group or school of hymnists who all signed with 'Qillir' with inclusion of the full name Eleazar birabbi Qillir? Already in the writings of Aristotle, the terms *poiesis* ('poetry') and *poietes* ('poet') have adopted the conventional meaning of 'making' or 'creating' verse.[4] Theological and literary notions of *poiesis* and *poietes* may have been known in both eastern Christian and Jewish hymnology.[5] Interestingly enough, it was the Christian theologian, philosopher

[1] Rutgers 2003, 385–408. [2] De Lange 2005, 418–21.
[3] Löffler and Rand 2010, 179–99. [4] Walker 2000, 17–70.
[5] Tigerstedt 1968, 455–88; McGuckin 2008, 648.

and hymnist Gregory of Nazianzus who first referred to liturgical verse as 'inspired text'. He called it *poiesis*, a coining that has survived in the origins of the Hebrew expressions 'piyyut' and 'paytas', variants of the more common term 'paytan' ('poet' or 'hymnist'). The plural 'piyyutim' is used for the religious hymns composed for insertion into communal prayer. As liturgical hymns of the time, the piyyutim were predominantly composed in Hebrew, in an attempt to let Hebrew function as a continuously developing language of literacy; however, prayer and hymnology may have also used Aramaic and Greek to a larger extent than we presently know.[6]

The main contribution of modern research in the field of early Byzantine-Jewish hymnography is of recovering poetic texts from the Genizah manuscript collections in which a large percentage of the texts consisted of hitherto unknown piyyutim. The resulting research aims at retrieving the traditions of piyyutic language and style as well as genres and structures. A number of scholars have noted the absence of any comparative methodology through which to retrace the intercultural contacts between Jews and their contemporaries during the late antique and early medieval periods and have come to acknowledge that the interdisciplinary perspectives of their studies cannot be ignored.[7] Similarly, scholars like Seth Schwartz and Catherine Hezser, who studied Roman and Byzantine Jewish society, eventually advocated that the designation of anything 'rabbinic' is not generally the same as 'Jewish'. Their reconsideration of Jewish society is important for a number of reasons, not least of which is its gesture towards a fresh and richer understanding of the relationship between Jewish and non-Jewish traditions through an examination of both the correlations and the differences between Jewish and Christian communities.[8] This strand of comparative research into the rabbinic or Talmudic world has evoked a paradigmatic shift in methodology that is and will probably remain controversial because of the religious and ideological objections it has prompted. The Jewish communities did not exist in isolation, however, and the study of late Roman and Byzantine Jewry has been deeply affected by the developments that shaped and transformed classical and post-classical studies in the last decennia in the process of coming to a better understanding of their sources and artefacts. Insights into religious and cultural identity may well be derived from the numerous remnants of Jewish prayer and poetry from late antiquity and the Middle Ages. Those

[6] Yahalom and Sokoloff 1999; van der Horst and Newman 2008.

[7] Rutgers 1995, 210–59; Rajak 2, 239–57; Münz-Manor 2009, 131–72; Yahalom 2012, 317–35.

[8] Schwartz 2001, 263–74; Hezser 2001; Hezser 2010; Fine 2005; Sandwell 2007.

were elements of an overall reconstruction of Jewish synagogue hymnography and liturgy throughout the ages, confirming the words of the founding father of piyyut research and exponent of the German *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, Leopold Zunz: 'Die synagogale Poesie darf man die Begleiterin der Geschichte des Judenthums nennen.'[9]

An important field of comparative cultural studies can be established if it aspires to a broader understanding of cultural phenomena with a focus on communication and a functional analysis of motifs and themes in distinct hymnological settings. Composers of both piyyut and Christian poetry had to find new ways to convey their religious-ideological intentions and to express their artistic skills. Themes and motifs of Christian Latin poetry increasingly encompassed spiritual imagination, exploring and exploiting the concept of allegory. Well-known examples of those were the typology of the dove (in Judaism signifying the people of Israel but in Christianity, the Holy Spirit) and the antonymic word-pair darkness/light as a figure of damnation against salvation (thus suggesting a number of meaningful associations, such as moral darkness being opposed to the enlightenment of the soul). One cannot but refer to Yannai, who was equally familiar with the contrast between darkness and light and the allegorical potential of this word-pair. He demonstrates this in his *qedushta*-composition for the Sabbath when Numbers 8:1 was read ('When Aaron sets up the seven lights'). He writes, especially in the famous seventh piyyut:

> The lamps of Edom became powerful and numerous; the lamps of Zion are destroyed and ravaged. The lamps of Edom burned increasingly stronger; the lamps of Zion are extinguished and quenched. The lamps of Edom are everywhere present; the lamps of Zion are set back. The lamps of Edom, their light is bright; the lamps of Zion are blacker than soot.[10]

Piyyut and Roman-Byzantine Christian hymnography

The comparable inclusion of typologies and word-pairs in both Byzantine Christian and Jewish hymnography leads to the observation that certain thematic patterns recur, especially those employing quotations from or allusions to Scripture, a commonplace in both religions.[11] We must frame our inquiry through several historical and literary considerations in order to study these patterns in detail. The increasing importance to Christian

[9] Zunz 1865, 108; Schorsch 1999; van Bekkum 2007, 235–48. On Zunz, see Veltri in this volume.

[10] Van Bekkum 1997, 109–20; van Bekkum 2008, 527–43; Lieber 2010b.

[11] Rajak 2002, 294–303.

discourse of eloquence and rhetoric is relevant to Judaic poetics (within its Greek and Hebrew milieus) and to Latin poetics (within its Christian Syriac and Greek milieus). Rhetoric was employed mainly for the sake of apologetics, as Lactantius demonstrated in his *Divinae Institutiones*, but was also used for the sake of so-called truly Christian verse.[12] In the preface to his *Evangelia*, Juvencus (early fourth century) presented some of the main rhetorical techniques applicable to poetry; to some extent, this was in contrast to the literary highlights of classical paganism, including classical Latin poetry. However, it would be a mistake (and an anachronism) to consider Virgil, Horace and Ovid as the enemies of Christian poetry. In fact, they were extremely influential in the moulding of a new type of Latin Church poetry which emerged in the mid-third century CE, as evidenced by the poetry of Juvencus, the slightly later hymnody of Ambrosius, and the rise of biblical narrative poetry in the fifth and sixth centuries.[13] The language of the classical poets pervades Christian Latin poetry of those and subsequent periods in much the same way as the language of the Hebrew Bible pervades Hebrew verse and all genres of piyyut in all periods.

Hymnodic analogies drawn from Scripture and its exegesis were found in many milieus but especially in Greek hymnody, which had evolved into something like its final shape by the fifth century CE. Questions of origins and development are even more complicated here, since a mix of ancient literary traditions (Hebrew, Syriac and classical Greek) comes into play, as well as an increasing tendency to paraphrase and retell scriptural events in a manner strongly reminiscent of the psalms and the non-psalmist poetry of Scripture. Greek religious verse drew distinctions among psalms, odes and hymns, and it would draw even more distinctions as the genre evolved. Great men – such as Gregory of Nazianzus, Synesios of Cyrene and, of course, John Chrysostom – encouraged Greek hymnody in churches and cathedrals, where it was composed according to all existing Greek metrical schemes. The aesthetics of liturgical verse went unchallenged in Byzantium, being codified through the formulation of a kind of theological doctrine on poetry and poetics – something entirely lacking in the Jewish environment. The evidence contained in piyyut reveals that Byzantine Jewry existed under quite specific cultural conditions.

A second element in this phenomenon is the so-called ecclesiasticization of religious hymns and their entrance into the domain of the Orthodox Church, something that appears to parallel the manner in which piyyut

[12] Roberts 2008, 629; Yahalom 2012, 317–35. [13] Den Boeft 1998, 175–86; Green 2006, 19–24.

in all its diversity of genre and language entered the domain of the synagogue. An examination of Jewish and Byzantine hymnography (and also Syriac poetry for that matter) may reveal a number of similar conditions under which hymns were brought into use in the fabric of the offices of prayer. One intriguing avenue is the comparison between the sung sermon and the sung midrash (assuming, as the early scholarship does, that piyyut emerged as one consequence of the active oppression of Jewish prayer and exegesis). Today, we can see how analytically promising this comparison can be: the sung sermon or sung midrash are fully fledged and elaborate hymns, which weave in and out of the biblical passages, taking up details and motifs and amplifying them, supplying lyrical enjoyment and didactic explanations that make their listeners identify with the subjects being sung or recited. The composers of both the Greek *kontakia* in the churches and the piyyutim in the synagogues thus have an equal interest in adapting scriptural motifs and homiletic ideas and inserting them into the poetic formats of their time.

One of the reasons for discussing this issue is the appearance of a book edited by the Bible scholar James L. Kugel, *Prayers that Cite Scripture*.[14] The book's contributors focus mainly on the scripturalization of prayer from the days of post-exilic Judaism until the times of Saadyah Gaon and beyond. Two contributions bear upon our subject. The first is an essay on liturgical uses of the Book of Psalms by Robert Brody, and the second is a study of the use of biblical verses in Hebrew liturgical poetry by Shulamith Elizur.[15] One intriguing element in Brody's exploration of *Massekhet Sofrim*, *Tractate of Scribes*, is his assertion that the so-called *pesuqey dezimra* or 'verses of song' do not refer to the recitation of entire psalms but to a florilegium similar to those found in some Qumran texts. A more frequent use of psalms in Jewish liturgy, both Babylonian and Palestinian, is first attested in the period of the Geonim and probably developed only at this time (i.e., the ninth to eleventh centuries). Brody discerns two basic forms: the first is the daily recitation of a block of psalms (145–50) in the preliminary portion of the morning service; the second is the Palestinian custom of reciting fifteen pilgrim songs daily (120–34), which on festivals extended to the end of the biblical psalter (120–50). Although not explicitly mentioned by Brody, the example of the Karaites may have been an important reason for the emergence of the liturgical custom of reciting a number of psalms, as they placed strong emphasis on the psalms as the exclusive instrument of liturgical practice. It was one of the founding

[14] Kugel 2006. [15] Brody 2006; Elizur 2006.

fathers of Karaism, Anan, who said that prayer must consist solely of psalms.

Brody's findings mesh with Elizur's analysis of biblical verse in both late antiquity and early Islamic piyyutim. She rightly observes that paytanim used three distinct techniques when imbedding verses in their compositions: verses accompanying the text; ornamental verses (i.e., opening or concluding strophes), and verses imbedded in the text. Let us concentrate on the first category, comprising verses that appear in a sequence of scriptural quotations concluding the poetic sections, often introduced by implicit references to the same quotations within the poetic lines. Elizur extensively elaborates upon the topic of biblical verse chains. Her conclusions seem to suppose that ancient Hebrew prayer consisted of standard text in conjunction with biblical verse chains, which in some cases of abridgment deserved to be ornamented by synagogue cantors with the aid of poetic introductions. Her views seem to me rather problematic, because not all genres of piyyutim are identically designed. For instance, the fact that the poetic segments such as the *magen* and the *mehayyeh* form a tripartite structure, as can be found in the first part of the early *qedushta*-compositions for Sabbaths (comprising three poetic strophes, biblical verses and a concluding poetic strophe) indicate that the poetry is neither a variant of prayer text nor an addition to the biblical verse chain.[16] The increasing use of psalms, or rather phrases and passages from the Book of Psalms, shows different levels of meaning. Inasmuch as this concerns the paytanim of the Byzantine and early Islamic periods, the nuanced ways in which Scripture is used in Qumran and Christian hymnodies can also be studied from the standpoint of references to psalm phrases in late antique Jewish compositions. Critics interested in statistics will count a substantial number of psalm references in the works of the Byzantine paytanim Yossi ben Yossi, Yannai, Simeon bar Megas, Yehudah, Yohanan ha-Kohen, Eleazar birabbi Qillir and Pinhas ha-Kohen, as well as many later paytanim from the Geonic era. These psalm references can be found in both festive hymnaries and in the cycles of compositions for outstanding and weekly Sabbaths.

To Elizur's threefold distinction, however, we should add three prosodic layers in the employment of psalmody and other scriptural passages in later liturgical-poetic traditions. These layers have both intertextual and structural significance and imply three associative effects. The first layer is the biblical-psalmodic association; the second is the midrashic-explicative

[16] Elizur 2008, 425–73.

association; and the third is the paytanic-hymnodic or piyyutic-lyrical association. One should speak here of associations rather than of definitions, in accordance with the idea that one cannot achieve full stability in the determination of poetic processes: it is always desirable to leave room for the values of creativity and figuration. The biblical psalms themselves employ various strategies through which the psalmist arrives at a level of expressivity and aesthetic power, but, once sanctified and canonized, these texts were recycled on different levels of insertion and intention. After all, liturgical chant is simultaneously a discipline and an art, and an acceptance of this duality is one of the main features of the hymnodist or paytan.

In the Syriac *troparia* of Ephrem the Syrian and in the Hebrew *qedushta*-compositions of Yannai, Simeon bar Megas and Yehudah, psalm phrases and verses recur for different purposes in sequences of quotations. In his *qedushta* for *Terumah*, Exod. 25:2 ('Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for Me an offering; from every man whose heart makes him willing you shall receive the offering for Me'), Yehudah has added three psalm verses and versified some of the psalmodic expressions. One of the citations is Ps. 51:14 *we-ruach nedivah tismekheni* ('Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit'). This is in connection with the Pentateuch portion of the day, *asher yidvennu libbo* ('whose heart makes him willing') and is within the first poem, the *magen*, with the words *bi-semikhat ruach nedivah otam le-racheymah* ('With the support of a willing spirit to have mercy with them'). Alongside the word 'spirit', the word 'heart' receives paytanic attention in the fourth poem within the same *qedushta* because of the main subject of *terumah* and the theme of defilement (of tabernacle and temple), highlighting the contemporary religio-political status of Jews in Byzantium: *metam'ey miqdash hashpel le-'imqey tohim; u-metanfey mishkan ba-avanim yihyu … him; 'aqor lev even we-ten lev basar la-kemehim; lev tahor bera li Elohim* ('Those who defile the sanctuary, lower them unto frightful depths; those who pollute the tabernacle, with stones they will …; remove the heart of stone and put a human heart in those who long [for you]; create for me a clean heart, O God') recalling the words of Ps. 51:12, *we-ruach nakhon chaddesh be-qirbi* ('And put a new and right spirit within me').

Such intricate fabrics of catchwords and subject matter, woven by the aforementioned textual associations, have added to the greatness of paytanim like Yannai and Qillir (and to the fame of melodists like Romanos) for both their contemporary and modern readerships (Lieber 2010a). Modern researchers have demonstrated that this type of paytanic originality and inventiveness in both structure and content is

a distinguishing feature of Jewish liturgical verse. Current research into Jewish liturgical poetry examines the extent to which the paytanim themselves created new poetic devices and forms, whereas prose homilies from the realm of midrash would have been merely given new meanings. For instance, every two rhyming hemistichs within a given liturgical poem establish a play of symmetry between meaningful sounds and sounds with meaning, often reflecting independent paytanic *derashot*. Not everything comes from midrash; in fact, the possibility of a paytanic contribution to the midrashic corpus, though a startling notion, should not be ruled out.

Paytanic identity and activity: the example of Yehudah

In this context, it is worthwhile to explore the practice of *paytanut*. The piyyut appears to have emerged in Palestine and may have been the literary product of cantor-poets (or hazzanim–paytanim) who served as functionaries within Torah-centred rabbinic Jewish elites. Many questions about the status and creativity of these liturgical composers remain speculative. Apparently, they were hired by synagogue leaders or belonged to the prominent members of a Jewish community. Their compositions were recited during prayer, most probably as stylish and artful additions to (rather than substitutes for) statutory prayer texts. Our access to the Byzantine piyyutim is almost exclusively via Genizah fragments of manuscripts and codices of a much later date. There are different routes and levels of redactional transmission: sometimes the formal strophic structure of piyyutim according to acrostic patterns or rhyme schemes has been retained; more often, these texts were copied without any inner division, occasionally with the exception of the transitions between the separate piyyutim.

A most intriguing question is that of the audibility or comprehensibility of piyyutic texts: did a synagogue audience listen to the recitation or singing of piyyutim for the sake of literary and linguistic enjoyment? How much of the public was capable of understanding the intentions and associations of the *paytan*?[17] Some scholars believe that the archaic and artificial Hebrew used in piyyut rendered it inaccessible to the larger part of its audience. There is no obvious reason to believe, however, that the literary products supplied by the Jewish hymnists for communal worship were not properly understood; synagogue audiences may well have been trained in paytanic code language and accustomed to the range of terms

[17] Van Bekkum 2002, 58–63.

for 'God', 'Israel', 'nations', 'Torah', 'Moses' and so on. The crucial role of the Pentateuch, the Hebrew Bible, the midrash, and other rabbinic writings as hypotexts of piyyutic compositions could have been very helpful, although paytanic originality and creativity are obvious and attractive.[18] This is best expressed in the language of the paytanim: an explanation of their use of language helps to understand an apparent discrepancy between paytanic Hebrew and the linguistic features of other segments or layers of Hebrew in their vocabulary, morphology and syntax. Upon closer investigation, the Hebrew of Byzantine piyyut, though linguistically very conventional, differs from its earlier or later counterparts in content and style.

The above-mentioned composer Yehudah (only his first name survived) could serve as an example for the world of hazzanim-paytanim who earned scholarly attention as outstanding literary artists in their own right rather than as mere official hymnists or liturgical poets.[19] Like other paytanim of this period, Yehudah composed *qedushta*-compositions for every Sabbath within the cycle of weekly readings from the Pentateuch or Torah. Doubts remain about Yehudah's provenance and identity, despite what is generally taken to be his conventionality and traditionalism, impressions strengthened by his strictly applied scriptural verse conclusions in every strophe of his each and every piyyut.[20] Most scholars would concur with the assertion of his Byzantine affiliation, although Yehudah may eventually have lived in southern Italy.[21] It was believed that he belonged to the early Islamic period and therefore was dated later than Yannai and Simeon bar Megas. Implicit codicological information seems to confirm, however, that Yehudah was much closer to the acknowledged Byzantine paytanim than was ever believed (some take his compository techniques and presentation of scriptural and poetic subject matter as evidence that he may even have preceded them). In a recent study of the Geneva Genizah, Shulamith Elizur argues that the consistent use of verse endings in poetic strophes is an indication of a paytan's 'lateness' (i.e., his placement in the post-Byzantine or early Islamic period): Yehudah's strict employment of verse endings in every strophe of his compositions thus makes him a later figure.[22] We must wonder, though, whether such a structural characteristic can be used as an exclusive criterion for the dating of his oeuvre when a number of allusions within the verses point to an early Byzantine composition. The reverse could also be true: such strict biblical adherence within piyyut as demonstrated by the

[18] Hollender 2008, 81–107, esp. 88–9. [19] Yahalom 2004, 441–53.
[20] Van Bekkum 1998, xiii–xxix. [21] Yahalom 2009, 318. [22] Elizur 2010, 182.

strict application of biblical verse endings could just as logically point to an early composition, thereby shifting Yehudah to the early stages of Hebrew liturgical verse. Yehudah could well be a representative of 'biblicist paytanut' and thus someone who may not need to be dated too far off from an early composer such as Yose ben Yose or other anonymous hymnists. Elizur explicitly states that the composers of *qedushta*-compositions share the common characteristic of quoting the first two verses of the *seder ha-yom* within each *magen* and *mehayyeh*, and the first verse of the *haftarah* in each *meshallesh*. Such a feature can be seen as evidence that Yehudah indeed belongs to the tradition of Byzantine paytanut. Moreover, one can find verse endings within strophes in Simeon bar Megas' *qedushta*-compositions and, predictably, in Yannai's piyyutim 5 and 6, whereas quite a few later paytanim such as Eleazar birabbi Qilar and Yehoshua bar Khalfa do not regularly use verse endings within strophic structures. Comparing the older genre of *qedushtaot* with the later genre of *yozrot* is a problematic technique, complicating Elizur's late dating of Yehudah. Is it conceivable that he is filling the gap in the historical reconstruction of Jewish hymnography between the '*avodah*-compositions of Yose ben Yose (late fourth to early fifth centuries) and the works of Yannai (sixth century)?[23] Notwithstanding these reflections on the dating of Yehudah, he provides an eloquent and almost timeless hymn of praise in honour of the Torah for the Sabbath on which Deut. 30:11 is read ('For this commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off'):

1 You have set a leader [Moses] for each generation,
To present the well-explained [Torah] to your people,
Your greatness will steady be in their mouth:
'The word that He commanded, for a thousand generations.' (Ps. 105:8)

Is she [Torah] not hard for the beloved ones [Israel]?
She [Torah] is called a lovely hind,
This is the Torah in which are engraved and written:
'Good statutes and commandments'. (Neh. 9:13)

By her right hand a long life was ordered,
By her left hand honour and richness was ordained,
Everyone who obeys a command will be delighted,
Learn this commandment!

As it is written: 'For this commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off.' <Deut. 30:11>

[23] Löffler 2008, 223–58.

As it is said: 'He who obeys a command will meet no harm, and the mind of a wise man will know the time and way.' <Eccl. 8:5>

As it is said: 'Moses commanded us a law, as a possession for the assembly of Jacob.' <Deut. 33:4>

As it is said: 'I have seen a limit to all perfection, but your commandment is exceedingly broad.' <Ps. 119:96>

As it is said: 'The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.' <Ps. 19:9>

Eyes you will enlighten,
For a people, fair and bright,
To protect the scattered flock,
By the righteousness of the father [Abraham] you told him: Do not fear.
Blessed [are you, O Lord, shield of Abraham]

II Likened to water [Torah], a daily delight,
Reviving the soul for those who go forth to redemption [Israel],
For the gain from her is better than gain from silver in keeping [Torah],
'Therefore observe what I command you this day.' <Exod. 34:11>

Your precepts are more desired than gold,
Your command is enlightening the eyes for the ones compared to fine gold [Israel],
Her true word shines like the finest gold,
'His head is the finest gold.' <Cant. 5:11>

Her measure is longer than the earth,
A captive of the heights is she called,
She is perfect and more precious than jewels;
He [God] spoke to the perfect [Israel] and said: 'It is not in heaven.'

As it is written: 'It is not in heaven, that you should say; "Who will go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?"' <Deut. 30:12>

As it is said: 'You did ascend the high mount, leading captives in Your train, and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell there.' <Ps. 68:19>

As it is said: 'A wise man scales the city of the mighty and brings down the stronghold in which they trust.' <Prov. 21:22>

As it is said: 'His head is the finest gold; his locks are wavy, black as a raven.' <Cant. 5:11>

As it is said: 'But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?' <Job 28:12>

You will add understanding to the burdened people [Israel],
Who take refuge in your shadow,
Let flow from all over heaven

The reviving drops of rain.
Blessed [are You, O Lord, who revives the dead]

III On the day that (all) hidden things will be unravelled,
This people will converse about your wonders,
So that they will have rest from all sufferance and tension,
'There is a river whose streams make glad.' <Ps. 46:5>

She [Torah] is a possession in her breadth and her length,
He [God] bequeathed her to His awesome people to sweeten her speech,
God understands the way to her,
'Man cannot know her price.' <Job 28:13>

He [God] has explained her [Torah] intention to the 'beautiful as Tirzah' [Israel],
Mighty in deed and great in counsel [God],
So that day and night [Israel] will learn eloquent things from her [Torah],
'Who can find a good wife?' <Prov. 31:10>

'Your peace will be like a river', You told them,
To the nation you have longed for,
You made it listen to your words,
'O that you had hearkened to my commandments!'

As it is written: 'O that you had hearkened to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.' <Isa. 48:18>

As it is said: 'Man cannot know her price, and she is not found in the land of living.' <Job 28:13>

As it is said: 'There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.' <Ps. 46:5>

As it is said: 'Who can find a good wife? She is far more precious than jewels.' <Prov. 31:10>

Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praise of Israel. <Ps. 22:4>

IV Until when we will turn aside from your commandments and your precept mentioned,
From the yoke of the adversary who overpowered us?
He who despises the word brings destruction on himself, so it is said,
'The king has charged me with a matter.' <1 Sam. 21:3>

Day and night to study his law,
With all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might to love Him,
When He called them to witness and made them listen to His precious oath,
'Remember the law of my servant Moses, what I commanded him.' <Mal. 3:22>

To appoint over them wise and understanding men,
Who understand wisdom, and who are also loyal,
To be precise about impurity and purity for ninety-eight reasons [*b. Eruvin* 13b]
'And now, O priests, this command is for you.' <Mal. 2:1>

To bless together, all the assembly of Israel,
To acquire merit and bestow merit, said Yekutiel [Moses],
To announce to a people saved by the Lord, happy are you, O Israel!
'Command the people of Israel.' <Lev. 24:2>

And you shall lend many nations, but you shall not borrow,
Likewise you shall wait for my salvation,
You shall set [your] heart upon keeping my commandment,
Satiate your neighbor with her [Torah], in keeping with all 'that I command'. <Deut. 4:2 >
He said: the Living and Existing [God].

V Truly, about this commandment and its specific wisdom,
The modest one [Moses] questioned heavens, and [heavens] talked to him faithfully,
About the explanation of this commandment and its wisdom, offered like a blessing,
They replied him: 'But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of
understanding?' <Job 28:12>

Firstly he asked the deep: 'Reveal to me, if you possess what is defined as wisdom,
I will seek to teach it to the people who accept my glorious announcement',
[The deep] spoke to him [Moses]: 'From above the commandment of the King will come',
'The deep says, "It is not in me."' <Job 28:14>

Secondly, he asked the sea: 'Is the pride of my eye [Torah] concealed in you?
I wished to bequeath her to my beloved community',
And he said: 'What are you doing, because through you my Beloved [God] has bequeathed her (to Israel)'
'And the sea says, "It is not with me."' <Job 28:14>

This [Torah] is likened to gold and her appearance is defined as glass,
Her words are hard to acquire like gold but easy to lose like glass [*y. Hagigah* 2, 1],
If you forsake her for days, she shall forsake you for years; she will not be in your heart,
'Its measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea.' <Job 11:9>

[God] has fixed [the Torah]: by her right hand to reward those who study her with a long life,
By her left hand [to reward them] with undiminished richness and honour,
The one who sits and deals with her [Torah] will be saved from evil hindrance,
'He who obeys a command will meet no harm.' <Eccl. 8:5>

Written and explained in seventy languages [Torah],
And explicitly called by seventy names [Torah],
Interpreted to the chosen [Israel] out of seventy [nations] are the matters of impurity and purity,
'The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart, the commandment of the Lord is pure.' <Ps. 19:9>

VI The strength of the statutes of this Torah,
Which the nut orchard [Israel] has inherited,
Therefore she [Torah] is not too hard, neither she is far off,
'For this commandment'. <Deut. 30:11>

The greatness of her law as told,
And her interpretation as studied with love,
The exactness of her religious precepts as preserved,
'It is not in heaven; that you should say.' <Deut. 30:12>

Her ways are broader than the sea,
Which the living and existing [God] has given,
And longer than the earth, as has been said,
'Neither is it beyond the sea'. <Deut. 30:13>

He is clothed with majesty and honour,
He made the sayings of the Torah exceedingly great,
Good statutes He has given you without error,
'But the word is very near you.' <Deut. 30:14>

The commandments of a good teaching,
Which are heard among 'how pleasant and good it is' [Israel],
Jointly to lead you in a good path,
'See, I have set before you this day life and good.' <Deut. 30:15>

Perfect will she [Israel] be before the Lord, your God,
For there is none like your Lord and your God,
For ever with all your soul and all your toil,
'By loving the Lord, our God'. <Deut. 30:16>

You will surely have a long life through her goodness [Torah],
If you pursue my ordinances,
To see her as the inheritance for the sons of sons,
'Then you shall live and multiply.' <Deut. 30:16>

But if you depart from your loving God,
Upon whom you will cast your burden,
Then He may become your enemy,
'But if your heart turns away'. <Deut. 30:17>

But if you act presumptuously not to listen to His precepts,
And act rebellious like transgressors and like rebels,
And worship the idols of the nations,
'I declare to you this day; that you shall perish.' <Deut. 30:18>

The holy ones who are like the dust of the earth [Israel],
Who are set like a blessing in the midst of the earth,
Will surely not remain distant from the sayings of 'longer than the earth' (Torah),
'I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day.' <Deut. 30:19>

Almighty, there is no second to Him,
Blessing and curse He has set for His assembly [Israel],
To elevate His name and to praise 'His work is perfect' (God),
'Loving the Lord your God, obeying His voice' <Deut. 30:20>

VII Truly, when I enlarge for you 'the place of heart and eyes' [temple],
'The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.' <Ps. 19:9>

The pre-eminent [God] has revealed to the 'beautiful as Tirzah' [Israel],
'Should your springs be scattered abroad?' <Prov. 5:16>

Your glory and your splendour I will make shine like water,
'Should streams of water be in the streets?' <Prov. 5:16>

The exclamation of your supplication should have reached my abode,
'O that you had hearkened to my commandments!' <Isa. 48:18>

May my prayer be pleasing for You, O Lord,
'Your righteousness is like the mountains of God.' <Ps. 36:7>

From above is given the [Torah] which is exceedingly long,
'Your commandment is exceedingly broad.' <Ps. 119:96>

The well-arranged [Torah] descended through the modest one [Moses] as a command,
'Her ways are ways of pleasantness.' <Prov. 3:17>

Those who break forth into speaking about her, I will delight them with joy,
'To understand a proverb and a figure'. <Prov. 1:6>

The high One [God] has set in her [Torah] His secrecies,
'All this I have tested by wisdom.' <Eccl. 7:23>

> Her service you will love like her study, [God] said to the nation adhered to Him,
> Understand what is said: 'I said, "I will be wise", but it was far from me.' (Eccl. 7:23>
>
> And now, for you the *Qedushah* benediction will follow.

Epilogue

The contents of this *qedushta* composition shows that the composer's implementation and exploitation of scriptural motifs and religious concepts includes the three above-mentioned associative effects of biblical reference and citation, midrashic narrative and paytanic lyrics. Generally, Yehudah closely follows the biblical intertext, but he also adapts his sources and combines laudatory qualifications of the Torah and its immeasurable importance in conveying his hymnal message designed to heighten the experience of worship. His didactic and instructive aspirations are reflected in his emphasis on the divine commandments that have to be respected and performed by Israel. Israel's adherence to the commandments implies a reconfirmation of the love between God and people and a perpetual blessing upon Judaism in full accordance with the intentions of the reading of Deut. 30:11. Since the structural formats imposed on Yehudah by himself and by authoritative literary conventions did not allow him to elaborate too extensively on the themes involved, he availed himself of the poetic powers of allusion, suggestion and imagination as well as other rhetorical devices.

One is easily tempted to speculate on the practical functionality of these and other hymns, which were destined for a synagogue public with whom the composer desired to communicate his artistic activity for the sake of his and their Jewish affiliation in a Christian societal and cultural context. Typical of the historical evolution of the Jewish attitude towards synagogue hymnodies is a fluctuation of internal liturgical factors and external cultural pressures. They seem to have created a spectrum of dispositions within individual composers and various stances pro and contra the popularity of the principal genres. This phenomenon is not confined to the Jewish milieu: the festival and Sabbath/Sunday hymnodies of Hebrew, Syriac, Byzantine and Catholic liturgies equally adopted new genres of poetry. The Syriac *madrasha* was displaced by verse texts that can be described as *qale*, the simple verses; the Byzantine *kontakion* was gradually replaced by the *canon*; and in Hebrew hymnography of the ninth to eleventh centuries in the Islamic east, the *qedushta* made way for the

yozer-composition, only to be resumed in medieval Ashkenazic Europe and in Andalusia.

In conclusion, piyyut should be viewed as literary and religious art, because there is no denial whatsoever of the creativeness of the individual hymnist despite the fact that, in the period under discussion, the hymnist hardly speaks for himself but always for a specific community as the embodiment of a people transcending history and time. Synagogue poetry was not just didactic or elitist, but served a wider audience or readership; this was poetry for the people. Modern scholarship would hope and expect that these hymns offer us more than glimpses into the external reality of these past times but the examination of these sources as literary texts conveying ideas and concepts of early medieval Judaism has by no means been completed. The use of recently digitized databases opens functional and analytical ways of approaching Byzantine Jewish hymnography with the inclusion of adjacent disciplines. Piyyut as poetry deserves to be explored and studied as one of the major literary expressions of Judaism and Jewish existence over the course of many centuries.

CHAPTER 18

On the Hebrew script of the Greek–Hebrew palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah

Judith Olszowy-Schlanger

In his research on Greek-speaking Jews in the Middle Ages, Nicholas de Lange has contributed considerably to the study of manuscripts, including those from the Cairo Genizah, and notably to the different ways the Hebrew and Greek languages and scripts interacted on the same page. His paper of 1982, 'Two Genizah Fragments in Hebrew and Greek', examined the entire identified corpus of Hebrew-Greek manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah, and divided them into three separate groups: (1) Greek texts reused as palimpsests and overwritten in Hebrew; (2) fragments in Greek language and script; and (3) Hebrew texts including Greek words written in the body of the Hebrew text, in Hebrew characters.[1] These groups of manuscripts have been studied further by Nicholas de Lange in his *Greek Jewish Texts from the Cairo Genizah* (1996a), and manuscripts containing biblical texts have been included in the Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism website (GBBJ), which he has developed with his team.

Different degrees of proximity between the Hebrew and Greek texts can be observed across these manuscript groups. From Greek glosses integrated into the body of the Hebrew text by the scribe himself, through marginal glosses in Greek which dialogue with the main text in Hebrew, to Greek manuscripts recycled as palimpsests, and finally Greek

I thank the Syndics of Cambridge University Library for the permission to publish the Genizah fragments included in this chapter. My special gratitude goes to the Taylor-Schechter Genizah Research Unit and its director Ben Outhwaite.

[1] De Lange 1982, 61–83. To this subdivision, can be added Hebrew manuscripts which have received marginal annotations in Greek, in Greek characters: T-S F 2(1).164, a folio from *b. Baba Meṣi'a* 93a–b retrieved from a book binding, with sporadic vowels according to the extended Tiberian system and Greek marginalia in Greek majuscules: see de Lange 1989, 14. The traces of the folding of the parchment to be used as an outer book wrapper are clearly visible on the manuscript. T-S C 6.117 + Westminster College Talmudica 1.110, philological notes on the Pentateuch with Greek annotations in Hebrew and in Greek characters: see de Lange 1996a, 85–116; GBBJ, MS 1 (online: http//:gbbj.org: see bibliography there), and Oxford, Bodl. MS Heb. e. 43 fol. 51, Hebrew Proverbs 17:16–19:3 with annotations in Greek majuscules: see Rüger 1950 275–7; GBBJ, MS 11 (http://gbbj.org).

manuscripts found in the genizah of the Jewish Ben Ezra synagogue of Fustat (the Cairo Genizah), but otherwise unrelated to Jewish culture. Of course, all these manuscripts are linked by the fact that they originated in a place in the Near East where Greek was once used as a spoken vernacular and/or literary language among both Jews and their non-Jewish neighbours, and its use continued in some form after the Arab conquest, into the Middle Ages. However, despite this common aspect, the manuscripts as a comprehensive corpus are not necessarily homogeneous in relation to date, origin and script. A preliminary palaeographical and historical study confirms this impression. The Hebrew scripts of the Hebrew/Greek manuscripts from the Genizah belong to several different subgroups of the Oriental Hebrew script; some were probably copied in the medieval Byzantine territory, while others in Palestine or Egypt conquered by Muslims.

Pending a detailed palaeographical study of these different groups of manuscripts, I will focus here on what is the most homogeneous corpus: Hebrew manuscripts written as palimpsests on reused Greek codices. After some preliminary remarks, I will attempt to define, through a palaeographical analysis, some salient common characteristics of the 'palimpsest Hebrew' script and to describe it as a specific palaeographic 'type': while written by different scribes, the Hebrew script of the palimpsests seems to be a product of one distinct scribal 'school'.

Palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah have attracted considerable scholarly attention, and their first publications derive from the early years of Genizah research. There is a general consensus that Hebrew texts on palimpsest belong to the earliest strata of the Genizah material. However, we lack comparable dated manuscripts, and radiographic dating methods have not yet been applied to the Genizah palimpsests. Genizah Hebrew palimpsests were written on recycled codices in various languages such as Greek, Christian Palestinian Aramaic (CPA), Latin, Georgian or Syriac and Hebrew. Most of these recycled manuscripts came from Christian monastic settings in which these languages were used in liturgy and writing. Fourteen fragments of palimpsests from the Genizah contain Greek texts as their underscript. Two additional fragments, with the Talmud Yerushalmi, *Moʿed Qaṭan*, as the upper text, contain an illegible lower text which could be either Greek or CPA: Bodl. MS Heb. d. 54. 1 and a small fragment which completes its upper part, T-S AS 78. 412 (see below, No. 3). Another folio from the same manuscript, a recently discovered BNF Hébr. 1489 (1), belongs to the same codex of the tractate *Moʿed Qaṭan*, but contains as its lower script

a text in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic.[2] It is possible that another folio reused for the copy of this *Moʿed Qaṭan* codex came from a different and perhaps Greek manuscript, but the identification is at present uncertain, and these fragments remain beyond the scope of this chapter.

Thirteen fragments of Greek palimpsests have been collected and assembled according to the manuscripts from which they originate, and their texts were identified by Sokoloff and Yahalom in 1978.[3] One additional Hebrew-Greek palimpsest has been identified in the recently catalogued Geneva collection.[4] The lower texts of most of the fragments were published at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century,[5] and the Greek script was assessed by Tchernetska[6] who studied the complete corpus and compared the lower script with the Greek majuscule script types attested in other Greek manuscripts and palimpsests as analysed by Cavallo in 1967.[7] On the basis of this comparison, Tchernetska dated the Greek majuscule of these Genizah palimpsests roughly to the period between the sixth and seventh century CE. A recent study of the Greek of the Geneva palimpsest dates the lower text from the fifth/sixth century, but points out that some characteristics of the script suggest the seventh century.[8]

From the point of view of the Hebrew upper text, these fourteen fragments belonged to nine different Hebrew codices.

1 Fragments T-S 12.182, T-S 12.184 and T-S 20.50 all belong to a Hebrew liturgical manuscript containing Qerovot of Yannai (preserved passages follow Leviticus).[9] It seems that the Hebrew codex was composed of the leaves of at least two different Greek codices. The lower text in T-S 12.182 contains the Hexapla of Psalm 22 while both T-S 12.184 and T-S 20.50 are copied on folios from the same codex of Aquila's version of 1 Kgs 20:7–17 and 2 Kgs 23:11–27.[10] Cavallo has assigned the Aquila

[2] For the correct joining of these fragments and their study, see Olszowy-Schlanger and Shweka 2013, 51–3.

[3] Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, 109–32. For the list and bibliography of the fragments from Cambridge, see Tchernetska 2000, 733–9. For an updated bibliography of the Genizah fragments, see the website of the Friedberg Genizah Project (www.genizah.org).

[4] See Rosenthal 2010, 280–2.

[5] Mainly by Burkitt 1897 and Taylor 1900. The Greek Old Testament manuscripts were described by A. Rahlfs in 1914: this publication has been recently updated by D. Fraenkel; see Rahlfs–Fraenkel 2004. For the manuscripts containing New Testament texts as the lower script, see Aland 1994.

[6] Tchernetska 2002, 243–56.

[7] Cavallo 1967. [8] Trachsel and Yiftach-Firanko 2012, 783.

[9] Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, 125, no. XXXIV.

[10] For the description and bibliography of the Greek texts, see: T-S 12.182: Rahlfs–Fraenkel 2004, 50–1; Tchernetska 2002, 245. The Hexapla lower text was edited by Taylor 1900, 4–11, Aquila fragments by Burkitt 1897, 5–8. See GBBJ (http://bbj.org), MS 12.

fragments to the sixth century,[11] while the Hexapla fragments may date from a century later.[12]

2 Fragment T-S 12.185 contains a passage from the midrash *Pirqei de-Rabbi Eliezer* as the upper text.[13] The lower text is poorly preserved and has not yet been identified. N. Tchernetska was able to read some words which suggest a philosophical or grammatical text rather than a Christian religious work, and described the script as Alexandrian majuscule, tentatively datable to the sixth/seventh century.[14]

3 Fragments T-S 12.186, T-S 12.187 and T-S 12.188 belong to the same codex of the Talmud Yerushalmi as far as their upper text is concerned. The text has been identified as passages from the tractate *Taʿanit* 69c (43–52) and *Moʿed Qaṭan* 80a (43)–81d (9).[15] This Talmud Yerushalmi codex was copied on the leaves from the same Greek Psalter containing the version of Aquila, Pss. 90:17; 91:1–92:10; 96:7–98:3 and 102:16–103:13.[16] The Greek script has been attributed to the fifth/sixth century.[17] Sokoloff and Yahalom have suggested that a small fragment T-S AS 78.412 is the upper part of the folio of T-S 12.186. In reality, T-S AS 78.412 belongs to a folio from a different manuscript of *Moʿed Qaṭan* of the Talmud Yerushalmi, Oxford, Bodl. MS Heb. d. 54. 1, also a palimpsest (see above).[18]

4 Fragments T-S 12.189 and T-S 12.208 belong to the same codex of the midrash *Bereshit Rabbah*.[19] The lower texts are apparently both written by the same hand. They contain New Testament passages (Acts 24:22–5 and 1 Peter 2:22–3:7).[20] Tchernetska observed the affinity of the Greek script with manuscripts Cavallo attributed to seventh-century Egypt, but Aland dated to the sixth century.[21]

11 Cavallo 1967, 84. 12 See Tchernetska 2002, 245.

13 Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, no. XXXIII: the text of the midrash corresponds to fol. 108b (14)–110a (8) of the printed edition.

14 Tchernetska 2002, 251.

15 Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, no. XXVIII. The text of the Talmud Yerushalmi from these fragments was published by Ginzberg 1909, 185–8, 191–8. See as well GBBJ (http://gbbj.org), MS 15.

16 See the bibliography in Rahlfs–Fraenkel 2004, 51–2; Tchernetska 2002, 245.

17 Rahlfs–Fraenkel 2004, 51–2; Tchernetska 2002, 245.

18 Olszowy-Schlanger and Shweka 2013.

19 Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, 125, no. XXXI. The upper text corresponds to the edition of Albeck 1903, reprint 1965, 724(2)–44(8) and 1254(12)–68(7). The upper text of these fragments was edited by Sokoloff 1971, 108–11; 149–52.

20 Aland 1994, no. 93. See bibliography in Tchernetska 2002, 247.

21 Cavallo 1967, 88–9.

5 T-S 16.93 contains five small fragments of the same folio of the *Pesiqta de Rav Kahana* 7:6–8:4 and 11:1, as the upper text.[22] The lower text belongs to a New Testament lectionary containing Matt. 10:2–15 and John 20:11–15.[23] There is disagreement among scholars about the date of the lower text: Aland has dated the script to the ninth century, but others argue for a dating in the sixth century.[24]
6 Fragment T-S 16.320 contains Talmud Yerushalmi *Moʿed Qaṭan* 82a (18)–82b (2–64) as the upper text.[25] The Talmud was written on a folio from a Septuagint Psalter, containing Pss. 143:1–144:6.[26] The lower script has been dated to the sixth century.[27]
7 Fragment T-S F 17.4 contains a passage from the Talmud Yerushalmi, *Soṭah* 22d (46)–23a (29) as its upper script.[28] A further ten fragments from the same codicological unit of the Talmud Yerushalmi have been identified so far.[29] The lower text of this fragment was a Jewish work: a biblical glossary where Hebrew lemmata were translated into Greek written in Greek characters.[30] The lower script could date from the ninth century.
8 Fragment T-S AS 78.411 contains the Mishna, *Baba Qamma* 1:3–2:1 and 4–5.[31] The lower text has not been identified, but Tchernetska has suggested that the Greek text may not be Christian.[32]
9 Fragment Geneva MS 17. The upper text contains piyyutim in Hebrew. The lower Greek text contains a martyrological text, which, for the time being, has not been identified more precisely. The Greek script has been tentatively dated by Trachsel and Yiftach-Firanko to the fifth–sixth century, but some elements suggest a later dating, in the seventh century.[33]

A preliminary appraisal of the nine units shows that each unit was written by a different scribe. Nevertheless, as far as their script type is concerned, they share several characteristic features. Their script is typologically

[22] Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, no. XXXII. [23] Aland 1994, no. 296.
[24] See Tchernetska 2002, 248.
[25] Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, 124, no. XXIX. The upper text was edited by Ginzberg 1909, 119–22.
[26] See Rahlfs–Fraenkel 2004, 52–3; Tchernetska 2002, 249.
[27] Rahlfs–Fraenkel 2004, 52–3; Tchernetska 2002, 249.
[28] Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, no. XXX. The upper text was edited by Ginzberg 1909, 215–18.
[29] For the list and bibliography, see Olszowy-Schlanger and Shweka 2013, 51–3.
[30] The lower text was published and studied by Tchernetska, Olszowy-Schlanger and de Lange 2007, 91–128.
[31] Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, no. XXVII. [32] Tchernetska 2002, 250.
[33] Trachsel and Yiftach-Firanko 2012.

Oriental, but probably constitutes a separate sub-group or 'school'. This Hebrew script of Hebrew/Greek palimpsests is typologically identical with the Hebrew script on the palimpsests containing a lower script in other languages, such as Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, Georgian, Syriac or Hebrew.[34] In some cases, the same Hebrew codex copied by the same scribe was produced using more than one ancient codex, sometimes in a different language; for example, our No. 7, whose lower text is in Hebrew and Greek, belongs to the same Talmudic codicological unit whose ten other preserved fragments are overwritten on recycled CPA manuscripts (see above). The study of the upper script of the Hebrew-Greek palimpsests as a group is therefore somewhat artificial, and is a first step towards a broader definition of this particular 'school' of Hebrew script, and a starting point for a more systematic comparison with Hebrew palimpsests on recycled codices in other languages.

The following analysis concerns the script – a typological entity represented by a group of manuscripts written by different scribes (and therefore in different handwriting) but sharing common features because they all worked in a similar historical and geographical context and/or followed the similar tradition of apprenticeship. The aim of such analysis is to identify and describe elements that the products of different scribes have in common. It involves, therefore, a search for similarities between the different manuscripts and handwriting, disregarding obvious differences between individual hands. These similarities include both general aspects of the writing and the morphological features of individual letters.

The first general impression allows us to define the Hebrew script of all nine manuscripts as of square-style, whose distinctive features in relation to other Oriental square script types include the predominance of sharp angles strengthened by the slanted bases of the letters, sharp meeting-points between the strokes, diamond-shaped heads of letters and strokes (*zayin*, *nun*, but also the arms of *ṭeth*, *'ayin* and *shin*), and a large number of prominent additional strokes (serifs), giving a 'spiky' aspect to the script. In all cases, the writing is slow: each letter was traced by a number of separate strokes executed with a calamus (reed-pen) cut at an angle. Nexus forms (a hybrid constituted by the ligature of two letters) appear (e.g., *aleph–lamed* in No. 6), but they are also elaborate and contain several strokes, including an additional dot on the top: the ligature of these two letters was not used as a time-saving device.

[34] See lists in Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978, 118–27.

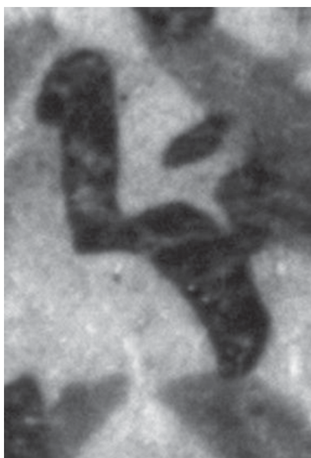

Figure 18.1 Nexus *aleph–lamed* in No. 6 (TS 16. 320).

The writing is careful and elaborate and contains several calligraphic features. The degree of calligraphy varies according to the manuscripts: No. 1 is particularly decorative, contains wavy descenders and a large number of additional decorative strokes, while the characters of No. 8 are traced with a fewer number of strokes. Calligraphic features also include additional flags at the end of the ascender of the *lamed*. Among features common to all eight manuscripts that characterize the group as a whole, we shall focus on careful differentiation between similar letters, slanted bases, prominence of serifs, proportions between the length of descenders and the body of the letter, on the place of specific letters in respect to the line of writing, calligraphic additions such as diamond-shaped 'heads' and finally on the distinctive ductus and morphology of the letters *aleph* and *pe*.

1 Different shapes for similar letters

All eight scribes take particular care to differentiate letters which in other types of Hebrew script are easily confusable. Here *beth* is always different from *kaph*, *daleth* from *resh*, *he* from *ḥeth*, final *mem* from *samekh*.

Beth has a characteristic base that is sharply slanted, traced at an angle to the baseline. The horizontal upper bar is slightly concave, and ends with an additional serif on the left. The right-hand downstroke descends straight to the baseline. The base of the letter extends beyond the meeting-point with the downstroke. Very often, the horizontal bar is shorter than

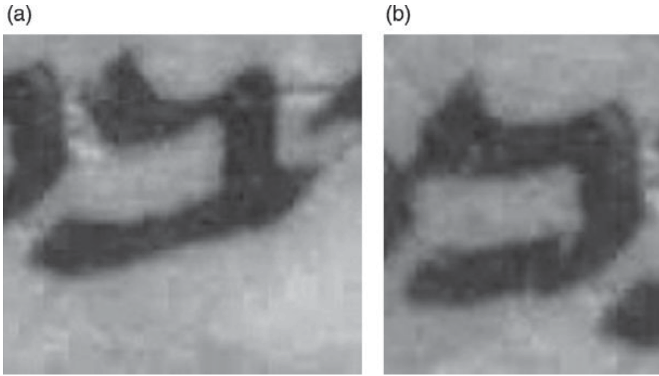

Figure 18.2 *Beth* and *kaph* in No. 5 (TS 16. 93).

the base (particularly in Nos. 4, 6 and 7). *Kaph* also possesses a slanted base and a slightly concave upper horizontal bar ending with a serif. But the right-hand downstroke and the base touch each other in a way that creates a rounded butt. The base and the top horizontal bar are usually of equal length.

Daleth is traced with two basic strokes forming a horizontal upper bar and a right-hand downstroke meeting at a right angle. The horizontal bar is parallel to the headline. The downstroke descends straight to the baseline. Its top extremity extends beyond the meeting-point with the horizontal bar, and points upwards. Sometimes, it is prolonged by a small thin additional stroke (No. 1). In all cases, the opposite left-hand end of the upper bar is provided with an additional serif, which is almost parallel to the right-hand upward extension of the downstroke. This serif is particularly prominent in Nos. 1, 3 and 6, but small in Nos. 2 and 4. In No. 1, the serifs are traced with thinner lines. *Resh* is traced with one rounded movement, with a smooth curve between the upper horizontal bar and the right-hand downstroke. The downstroke often becomes thinner at its lower extremity. The horizontal bar is ended by an additional serif in all the manuscripts but No. 8.

The letter *he* is composed of an upper horizontal bar ended on the left by an additional large serif pointing upwards. The right-hand descender often does not reach the baseline and stops short of it compared to the left-hand descender. The meeting-point between the upper horizontal bar and the right-hand descender is usually angular, but the strokes do not extend beyond that point. In No. 3 it can be rounded. The left-hand downstroke never touches the upper horizontal bar, and can be very short (No. 6), and

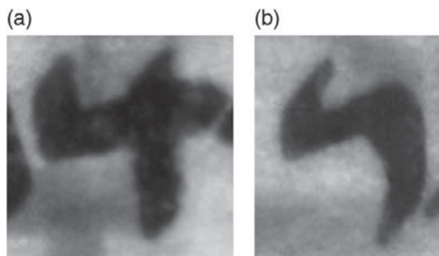

Figure 18.3 *Daleth* and *resh* in No. 3 (TS 12. 186)

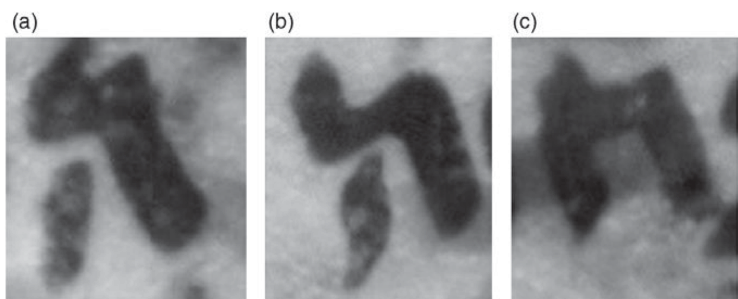

Figure 18.4 *He* and *ḥeth* in No. 3 (TS 12. 186).

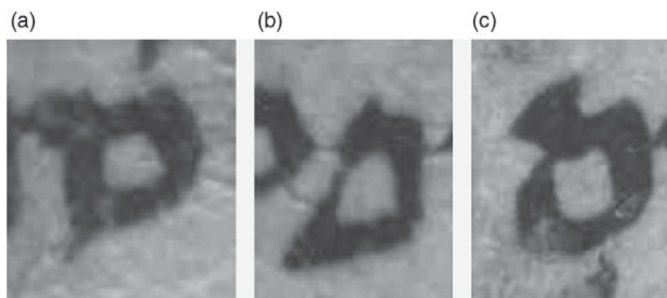

Figure 18.5 Final *mem* and *samekh* in No. 5 (TS 16. 93).

its top extremity is placed towards the inside of the letter. It is often stylized: wavy, with a thickening in its middle and thin, sharp extremities. It can be diamond-shaped, traced as a short stroke of the width of a calamus cut to an oblique edge (No. 1 and 6). *Ḥeth*, however, has a left-hand downstroke which is always attached to the upper horizontal bar, always at the

Figure 18.6 The impression of leaning to the left: No. 3 (TS 12. 188v).

extreme left of it, in such a way that the width of this downstroke extends beyond the left-hand limit of the upper bar. This makes *ḥeth* broader than an average *he*. The left-hand downstroke is usually slightly longer than the right-hand one.

Final *mem* is rounded, and can be pear-shaped. Its upper horizontal bar usually contains an additional serif. The left-hand downstroke touches the upper bar with a thin end of the stroke. The left-hand downstroke of the *samekh* is perpendicular to the baseline, and meets with the slanted base of the letter creating a sharp thorn, extending slightly below the base. The left-hand downstroke crosses the upper bar and extends beyond it upwards.

2 Slanted bases

A characteristic aspect of the script are bases of the letters *beth*, *ṭeth*, *kaph*, *mem*, *nun*, *samekh*, *ʿayin*, *pe* which are not parallel to the baseline but raised to the right at an angle of about 20–25°. This gives an angular aspect to the script: indeed, the letters, for example *beth*, are lozenge rather than square shaped, touch the baseline with a sharp end and seem to 'fall' to the left. The balance of the lozenge-shaped outlines and the leftwards tendency is strengthened by the difference of the length of the downstrokes of the letters which do not have bases, such as *he* and *ḥeth*, *tav*, as well as by sharp, triangular lower ends of *ṭeth*, *samekh* and *shin*.

3 'Spiky' aspect

The script contains several elements which give it a sharp and pointy aspect, created by the sharp angular meeting-points between the strokes, sharp ends of individual strokes traced with a calamus cut at an angle, by a number of diamond-shaped elements, such as decorative heads of *gimel*, *zayin*, *nun*, and especially by the presence of a number of additional serifs. Especially in No. 1, most strokes, including not only upper horizontal

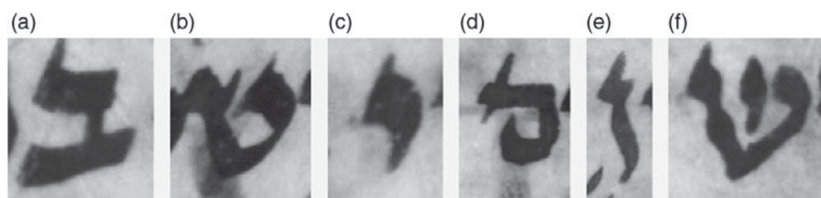

Figure 18.7 Additional serifs in No. 1 (TS 12. 182).

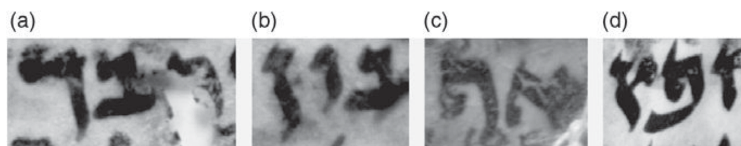

Figure 18.8 Final *kaph* and *nun* in No. 3 (TS 12. 186), final *pe* in No. 2 (TS 12. 185) and final *ṣade* in No. 1 (TS 12. 184).

bars, but also *yod* or the diamond-shaped endings of the downstrokes of the *ṭeth*, end with additional thin but relatively long lines.

4 Short and decorative descenders

A characteristic feature of the script is the short descenders of final *kaph*, *nun*, *pe*, *ṣade* and *qoph*. While the ascender of the *lamed* is usually equal to or longer than the body of the letter contained within the line of writing, the descenders most often extend only slightly below the baseline, and are much shorter than the height of the body of the letter. This gives a compact aspect to the baseline of the writing. The descenders are often wavy, with a thin left-facing extremity.

5 Letters going below the baseline: *gimel*, *ʿayin*, *pe*

Some of the letters which are contained within the line of writing in most Hebrew script-types are here larger and regularly descend below the baseline. *Gimel* in No. 8 is long in both its right and left downstrokes, while in the other manuscripts at least one of its downstrokes goes below the baseline, and/or underlines the following letter. The main stroke of the *ʿayin* is particularly long, slanted and underlying the following letter. *Pe* has a large head and long, often slanted base and descends below the baseline.

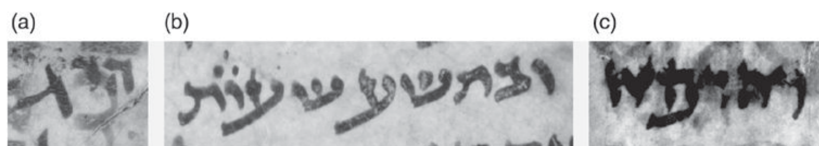

Figure 18.9 Long *gimel* in No. 8 (TS AS 78. 411), long *ʿayin* in No. 2 (TS 12. 185) and large *pe* in No. 1 (TS 12. 184).

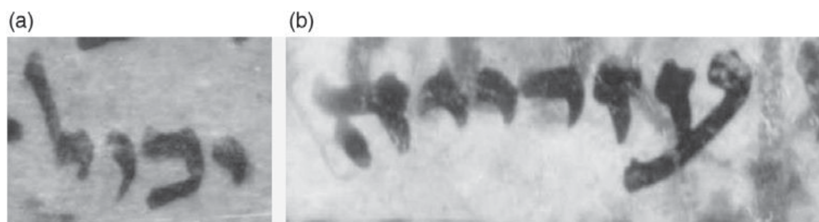

Figure 18.10 Short *lamed* and *resh* in No. 2 (TS 12. 185).

6 Short downstrokes

Some letters have unexpectedly short downstrokes which do not reach the baseline. This is especially the case with the *lamed*, whose downstroke can be reduced to a very short line, as in No. 2 and No. 9, but, even when it is longer, it almost never reaches the baseline. *Resh* tends as well to be shorter than other letters.

7 Decorative heads

Several letters contain decorative diamond-shaped heads: *gimel*, *zayin*, *nun*. Arms of some other letters, such as *ṭeth*, *ʿayin* and *shin*, also end with a decorative diamond on the top. In some manuscripts, especially in No. 1 and No. 9, they are additionally provided with thin serifs.

8 Particular shapes of some letters

The morphology of some letters is very distinctive and differs from other Oriental Hebrew script sub-types. The most characteristic letters are *aleph* and *pe*.

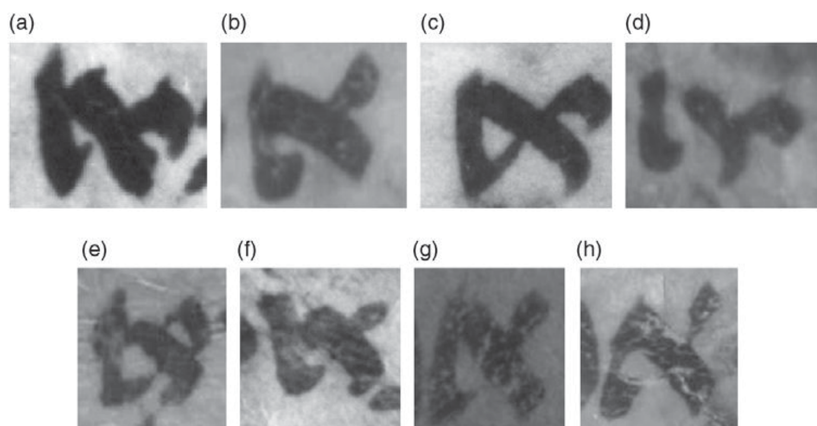

Figure 18.11 *Aleph* in Nos. 1–8.

Aleph

Aleph written by each of the scribes, but also individual letter *alephs* written by the same scribe, display a number of differences. However, they all share some features which can be considered as pertinent common typological characteristics, and differ from the other sub-types of the Oriental Hebrew script. The main shared point for all the *alephs* in this group is the basic structure of the letter, as well as the presence and ductus of some additional elements. The basic structure of the *aleph* consists of three strokes: (1) main oblique stroke, (2) left-hand downstroke and (3) right-hand short stroke. (1) is traced with the full width of the calamus, from the headline on the left to the baseline on the right. It is usually curved to the left at the foot. (2) is almost perpendicular to the line of writing, and links directly the headline and the baseline. It touches the upper extremity of (1). In most cases, the strokes meet at the corner to the width of the stroke, creating a characteristic dent at the meeting-point. (2) is ended at the bottom by a foot which turns invariably towards the middle of the letter. Sometimes it is composed of a long line which links with (1) and the extremity of (3) (No. 3), giving the letter a compact aspect turned inwards, reminiscent of the Greek *alpha*. (3) is short, sometimes curved (Nos. 3, 5). It is linked to (1) either by a thin line (Nos. 2, 7 and 8), or touches it directly with the left-side extremity to the width of the stroke (Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5, 9).

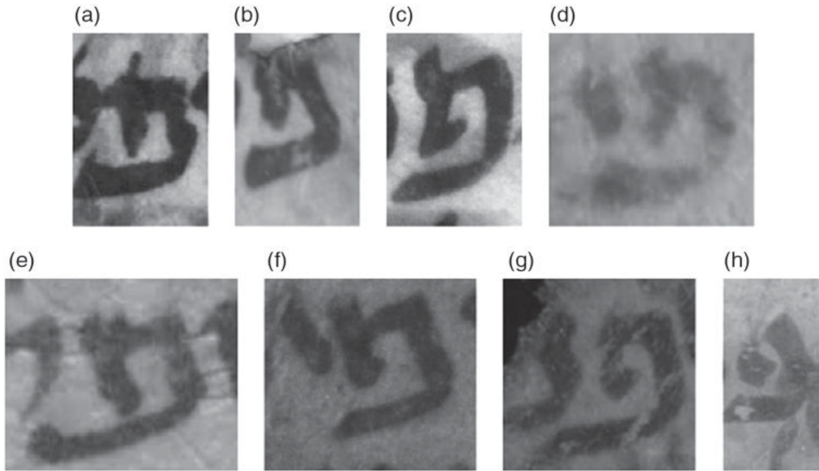

Figure 18.12 *Pe* in Nos. 1–8.

Pe

Pe is characteristically large, often considerably broader and longer than the average letters. It is traced with four main strokes: (1) horizontal upper bar, (2) right-hand downstroke, (3) base and (4) left-hand short stroke or 'nose'. (1) is relatively long and almost perpendicular to the headline. It meets (2) at an almost straight angle, except for Nos. 3, 4 and 8 where the meeting-point is rounded. (2) descends towards the baseline leaning to the left. (3) is long and slanted, and meets (2) without exceeding its limits. (4) is relatively large. It is attached almost perpendicularly to (3), and can be curved inside the letter with a sharp or rounded hook at the extremity (especially Nos. 3, 6, 7 and 8). It can extend beyond the upper horizontal bar (Nos. 2, 5, 6, 9) or be prolonged with an additional thin serif (Nos. 1, 3, 4, 7, 8).

The above characteristics shared by the nine Hebrew manuscripts on reused Greek codices differ from those of the earliest dated examples of the Oriental Hebrew square script of classical type found in early tenth-century Bible codices of both Babylonian and Tiberian type, such as the Genizah fragments of the most ancient explicitly dated Hebrew book (T-S NS 246.26.2, and other fragments, copied in 902 CE, Iran) or the tenth-century British Library MS BL MS Or 9879, or the Codex Babylonicus Petropolitanus (916 CE, Iraq or Iran?).

Figure 18.13 General aspect of the script of T-S NS 246.26.2.

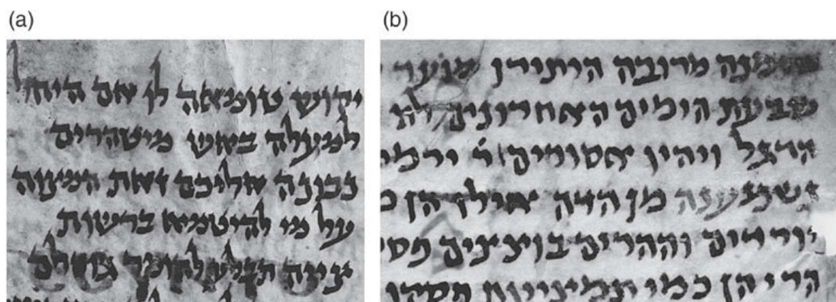

Figure 18.14 General aspect of the script, No. 1 (TS 12. 184) and No. 3 (TS 12. 186).

This classical Oriental square script differs considerably from the script of the palimpsests. The main differences include the general aspect of the characters which are square and give an impression of regularity. The letters are elongated; their average height is larger than their width. They do not contain long and thin serifs and do not give the same spiky impression. The diamond-shaped heads are either reduced in size or replaced by neat short rectangular strokes. The letters are less tilted, their bases being rather parallel to the baseline. Finally, the shape of the letters *aleph* and *pe* is structurally different.

The main difference in the shape of the *aleph* concerns the meeting-point between strokes (1) and (3). While in palimpsests stroke (3) started from the top extremity of (1) or even slightly higher, and descended almost straight to the baseline with a foot turning towards the inside of the letter,

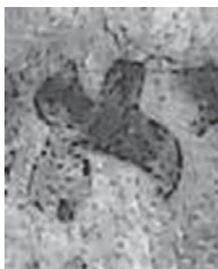

Figure 18.15 *Aleph* in T-S NS 246.26.2.

Figure 18.16 *Pe* in T-S NS 246.26.2.

in the type with classical script (3) starts below the extremity of (1), meets (1) at the level of one third of its length from the top, descends with a decorative curve and ends with a foot turning outside.

Pe is traced with three strokes rather than four: (1) horizontal upper bar and right-hand downstroke, (2) base, (3) left-hand 'nose', decoratively curved first towards the inside of the letter, to finish with a short foot facing outwards. *Pe* is not larger than the average letter and does not descend below the baseline. The horizontal upper bar is relatively short and slants gently downwards as a downstroke. The meeting-point between (1) and (3) is balanced more towards the top of the letter, and is marked with a tiny, dot-shaped 'hat'.

It is evident that the square script of the palimpsests and the script of the classical type used in calligraphic Bible codices constitute two very different sub-types of Hebrew Oriental script. The reason for the divergence might be chronological. The palimpsest type of script has been defined as 'Oriental proto-square' and described as a universal early type which evolved into the classical Oriental square script as represented in

the Masoretic codices from the tenth century.[35] Some of the features of the script of the palimpsests, such as prominent serifs, slanted bases and a characteristic structure of the *aleph*, are reminiscent of the Hebrew script-type attested, for instance, in the fragments of the scroll of the Book of Kings (1 Kgs 22:12–18) (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, Sackler Library, Antinoopolis Papyri nos. 47 and 48).[36] Found during archaeological excavation in 1912, the fragments of this parchment scroll have been attributed to the Byzantine period. The dating of these fragments is uncertain: for instance, Coptic documents found in this site date between the fifth and ninth centuries. It is possible that the Antinoopolis scroll, palaeographically close to the early Genizah fragments, belongs, like the Coptic documents, to the time after the Muslim conquest. Hebrew papyri discovered in Oxyrhynchus (Bahnasa) during the 1904–5 season by Grenfell and Hunt were found in the north-west part of the city's ancient refuse mounds, where the latest of the Greek papyri discovered bear dates in the fifth century.[37] The script of the Hebrew papyri contains serifs and a similar shape of the *aleph*, but its overall impression is different from that of our palimpsests script. The shape of the *aleph*, large *pe* and prominent serifs are also features of the Genesis scroll fragment from the Cairo Genizah (T-S NS 3.21) which has been dated on palaeographical grounds prior to the ninth century.

Despite the lack of firm dating for these manuscripts, it is the case that their type may go back to the Byzantine period. However, similar characteristics of the script can be found in a series of fragments from the Cairo Genizah which can be dated to the tenth and eleventh centuries, and are therefore contemporary with the calligraphic Masoretic codices written in a different sub-type of Oriental square script. In addition to a number of undated Genizah fragments in this script, the features, such as a sharp triangular aspect, large *pe* and the characteristic structure of the *aleph*, appear also in some dated biblical codices of the tenth century, which differ from those in the classical Oriental script: for example, T-S A 39.11 – Jeremiah, copied in Gaiffa, in Egypt in 953/4; and T-S B 17.38 – Haphtarot copied in 924, which may be of Egyptian or Palestinian origin.

Therefore, without questioning the place of the palimpsests' script among the earliest strata of Genizah material, we should stress the continuity of the use of a similar script type in the tenth century and even later, and define this type of script not only from a chronological but

[35] See Engel 1998, 369–71. [36] McHardy 1950. [37] Grenfell and Hunt 2007, 357.

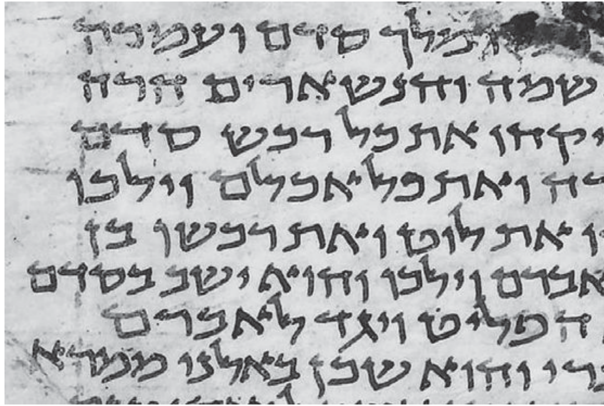

Figure 18.17 General aspect of the script in T-S NS 3.21.

also from a geographical point of view. The type of Oriental square script attested in the Genizah palimpsests appears not to be an organic ancestor of the classical script as attested in Masoretic Bible codices. It seems that while the classical type of Oriental script has Babylonian affinities, and possibly origins, the Hebrew 'palimpsest script' is clearly related to the Palestinian cultural orbit, or more generally to the western part of the Near East. It would therefore be more appropriate to call it the 'Western Oriental square type'. Its early forms were in use probably from as early as the Byzantine period and continued at least until the eleventh century.

While western origin – as opposed to eastern or Babylonian type – seems certain, it is very difficult to be more precise about the date and specific origin of the Greek/Hebrew palimpsests. Are they examples of Hebrew writing from Palestine, or were they copied further south, in Sinai and Egypt? It is logical to assume that these undated Genizah fragments (as far as their upper scripts are concerned) are not much older than the earliest dated Genizah material – from the very end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century. The depository of the Ben Ezra synagogue in Fustat was in operation from the mid-eleventh century, replacing previous genizah arrangements. It is likely that the bulk of the deposited undated manuscripts is roughly contemporary with the dated ones – even if some exceptions are possible. Of course, a *terminus post quem* is provided by the Greek lower texts, but, as with Hebrew script, the palaeographical dating and localizing of the lower script is uncertain: proposed dates for the same manuscript vary between the sixth and the ninth century (e.g., No. 5). Neither is there an objective and clear way to assess the time span between

the production of the original Greek manuscripts and their recycling by Jewish scribes. We should point out that all Greek manuscripts (except No. 7) reused for Hebrew codices are deluxe copies, on excellent quality parchment, often copied with large size Greek majuscules, and probably used for public reading in a monastery. Unlike less formal volumes used for personal study, such costly and elegant books were usually carefully protected from wear and tear and would normally have a long library shelf-life. It has also been pointed out that the extant recycled folios came from the inner sheets of the Greek quires – the outer sheets were more exposed to damage and were more easily worn out with time.[38] All this circumstantial evidence may suggest that a long period, easily several centuries, may separate the time the Greek codices were copied in a monastic setting and their recycling by Jewish scribes.

The Greek texts clearly came from a place where the production of Christian Greek books was thriving and Greek was commonly used in liturgy. The aforementioned connections with palimpsests in other languages such as CPA, Georgian and Armenian indicate a monastic milieu, where manuscripts in these different languages were copied and circulated. There is ample evidence that such a multilingual milieu was thriving in pre-conquest Byzantine Palestine, notably in Mar Saba or Saint Theodosius monasteries. Cyril of Scythopolis in the sixth century records that the mass in Saint Theodosius was sung daily in the relevant five languages.[39] These thriving Palestinian monasteries continued to be important centres of Christian book production after the Muslim conquest. After their destruction in the ninth century, some monks and the treasures from their library found refuge in the south: some of the most ancient manuscripts from Saint Catherine's Monastery reputedly come from the Palestinian monasteries.[40]

Egypt too was a leading centre of Greek book production.[41] Greek continued to be used several decades after the Arab conquest: in Egypt, the latest explicitly dated papyri in Greek are from 796–7 CE. In Fustat – the main administrative centre – Greek was used longer than in rural areas which adopted Coptic, before Arabic became the official language of administration. Jewish minorities maintained the use of Greek for an even longer period.[42] Tchernetska has compared the Greek script of some of the Genizah palimpsests with other Greek manuscripts whose production

[38] Sokoloff and Yahalom 1978. [39] Quoted by Blake 1965, 369.
[40] Blake 1965, 378. [41] Crisci 2000, 3–28.
[42] Fournet, forthcoming. I thank Prof. Jean-Luc Fournet for letting me consult his work before publication.

was located by Cavallo in the Syro-Palestinian monasteries of the Nitrian Desert in the north-western delta of the Nile.[43] Founded in the fourth–fifth century, the monasteries of this region were thriving and contained scriptoria at the time of the Arab conquest in 641. Many of them were looted in the seventh century, and most of them were abandoned during the eighth and ninth century. An argument in favour of the Egyptian origin of the lower Greek text could lie in the identification of the Greek script of No. 2 (T-S 12.185) as an Alexandrian majuscule which was in use mainly in Egypt. The presence of thriving monasteries, with scriptoria, some 100 km from Fustat, which then fell into disuse between the seventh and ninth centuries, may explain how they found their final resting-place in the Genizah of the Ben Ezra synagogue. However, a Palestinian origin for the lower script need not be excluded.[44]

One manuscript, No. 7, is of special importance: as we saw, it contains Hebrew and Greek in its lower script. Even more importantly, this is a biblical glossary where Hebrew words are explained through their Greek translation, which, as demonstrated by Nicholas de Lange, corresponds to the Jewish tradition of the Greek Bible.[45] The lower script indicates therefore not merely a place where Greek was used in Christian liturgy, but also a place where it was well understood (probably spoken) and used by the Jews in the context of the study of the Bible. Here again, both Palestine and Egypt are indicated.

The aforementioned connection of Hebrew/Greek palimpsests with those whose lower texts are in other languages and notably in CPA is another path to explore. The CPA/Hebrew palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah are thought to represent an ancient stage of the language – the script defined as a form of Estrangelo was used up to the end of the ninth century only. One of the most important manuscripts in CPA (besides the Genizah palimpsests), the *Codex Climatici Rescriptus* acquired by Agnes Lewis and Margaret Gibson in Cairo, most probably comes from Saint Catherine's Monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai.

The origin of the upper text can be different from that of the lower text. As we saw, early Christian books could travel from Palestine and be recycled in Egypt. It must be pointed out that, from the textual point of view, the upper layers of the Genizah palimpsests contain texts which suggest a place under the intellectual influence of the Palestinian tradition: Talmud Yerushalmi,

[43] Cavallo 1967, 87–93.
[44] For the view that some of these Greek manuscripts have a Syrian origin, see Crisci 1996, 151–2.
[45] As discussed by Nicholas de Lange in Tchernetska, Olszowy-Schlanger and de Lange 2007.

Palestinian liturgical poetry or Palestinian midrashim. Some manuscripts contain Palestinian vowels: T-S 12.185 (No. 2), T-S 16.93 (No. 5). However, all these features could be found in Egypt, too; Egyptian Jewry belonged culturally to the Palestinian tradition until the influx of Jews from the east and the growing influence of the Iraqi yeshivot in the tenth century.

In any case, the upper Hebrew script of the palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah constitutes a distinctive sub-type of the Oriental square script. Chronologically early, maybe slightly earlier than the earliest dated documents from the Cairo Genizah, this script comes from Palestine or a place under Palestinian cultural influence, such as Egypt. Further research on the Genizah palimpsests as a whole will perhaps qualify with more precision the origin of this script.

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